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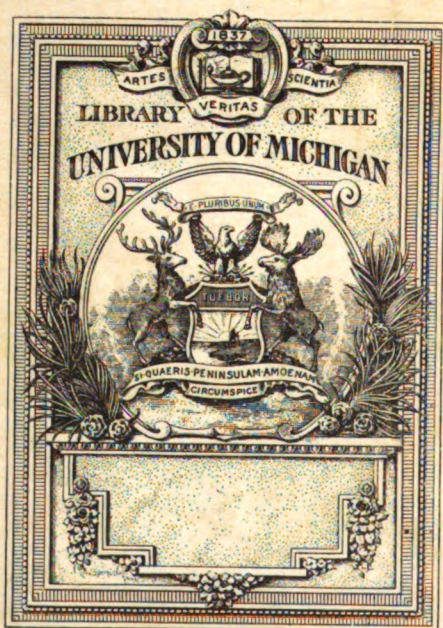
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*Posthumous memoirs  
of his own time*

Nathaniel William Wraxall

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**SIR N. W. WRAXALL'S**  
**POSTHUMOUS MEMOIRS**  
**OF HIS OWN TIME.**

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**VOL. III.**

**LONDON :**  
**PRINTED BY SAMUEL BENTLEY,**  
**Dorset Street, Fleet Street.**







GEORGIANA. DUCHESS OF DEVONSHIRE.

*Engraved by W. Read, from a Painting by Sir Joshua Reynolds.*

London. Richard Bentley. 1836.

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# POSTHUMOUS MEMOIRS

OF

## HIS OWN TIME.

SIR <sup>Nathaniel</sup> N. W. <sup>William</sup> WRAXALL, BART.

AUTHOR OF "MEMOIRS OF MY OWN TIME."

SECOND EDITION.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

LONDON :

RICHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON STREET,  
Publisher in Ordinary to His Majesty.

1836.





# POSTHUMOUS MEMOIRS

## OF MY OWN TIME.

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1788.

*January.* — During the lapse of more than seventy-three years, ever since the accession of the house of Hanover, no minister of this country, as I have already observed, had attained to the same degree of power and popularity as Pitt enjoyed at the beginning of 1788. Sir Robert Walpole, who, under two successive princes, for the space of at least twenty years, had filled the first place in the councils of the crown, neither deserved, nor acquired, the favour of the nation. To the preservation of his employments he sacrificed the character of parliament, where the most notorious corruption pervaded and directed every deliberation. To the preservation of peace, he sacrificed the glory and the interests of his country. France, between 1733 and 1735, was allowed by his tame, selfish, pusillanimous po-

licy, to conquer Naples for a prince of the house of Bourbon, and to incorporate Lorrain with her own dominions. However personally acceptable he might be to his two foreign royal masters, his fall was unaccompanied with any testimonies of national affection, respect, or regret. Mr. Pelham, it is true, possessed during the period of his administration, embracing about nine years, a great share of public regard; but it was conferred rather on his private virtues, than on his talents, or ministerial services. The treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, concluded while he held the first place at the treasury board, may be justly accounted one of the least glorious which we have signed since the peace of Ryswick. Of Mr. Pelham we may indeed say, as *Junius* does of Lord Granby, “*bonum virum facile dixeris; magnum, libenter.*” The first Mr. Pitt unquestionably was idolized, and justly, by his countrymen; while his powerful mind, at one and the same time, coerced the cabinet, subjected parliament, withered opposition, and directed, with no less ability than success, the energies of the nation against her foreign enemies. But he neither possessed the real confidence of George the Second, nor of George the Third; the former of whom employed him, as the latter retained him for a short time in office, not from choice, but in reluctant deference to the universal wishes of their subjects. Nor can it be forgotten that this illustrious statesman seemed



to be designed by nature exclusively for a time of war. His talents, like those of the Corsican Emperor of the French, were adapted, not for the calm, but for the tempest.

If Mr. Pitt had not been supplanted by Lord Bute, we doubtless should have retained, at the treaty of Fontainebleau, some of those valuable possessions in the West Indies which were restored by us to France and Spain. But it may be reasonably doubted whether the secretary's popularity would have long sustained itself after the conclusion of peace. He was wholly unqualified to preside over the finances; of which department, during his short and triumphant career, he left the superintendence to the Duke of Newcastle and Mr. Legge, while he dictated his pleasure to the treasury, as well as to the admiralty. His faculties, which were not calculated for the meridian of Downing-street, became felt at the extremities of Asia and of America; at Beslisle, at Manilla, at Martinique, in Cuba, and in Canada. Conscious of his powers, no less than of his deficiencies, he never emulated any higher ostensible office than secretary of state. From that position, his powerful mind domineered the cabinet during about four years, under two kings. Charles Fox, like the first Mr. Pitt, limited his ambition to the same employment, but not from a similar cause; for Fox, in my opinion, might have directed the finances of Great Britain with

as much ability as her foreign policy and councils. *His* defect lay principally in the irregularities of his private life. Lord North, for the space of full twelve years, enjoyed the perfect confidence of his sovereign. Not a cloud of any magnitude arose in the closet ; though during the calamitous interval between 1777 and 1782, when Lord North would more than once have willingly withdrawn from a ruinous contest, Jenkinson might receive marks of predilection or of confidence, withheld from the minister. But Lord North, as was once avowed by Dundas in the course of debate, wanted the energy and severity requisite to control his colleagues. He constituted the charm of private society. His wit, brilliant and playful, never became acrimonious. He was an accomplished orator, an able financier, irreproachable in his individual character, and fully adequate to conduct the national affairs in ordinary times. His crime was the American war. In that abyss he became ultimately ingulphed.

Pitt's situation at this time bore no analogy to any of the four preceding ministers. It is difficult to imagine what a magic there was in his name ; I might say, his *names* (baptismal as well as family denomination), which seemed to present his father anew before the eyes of parliament. Neither did Fox, nor does the present Earl of Liverpool, enjoy this advantage ; as, though their respective fathers were men of great

intellectual endowments, I scarcely remember two more unpopular individuals than Lord Holland and Charles Jenkinson. The chancellor of the exchequer still wanted several months of having accomplished his twenty-ninth year. Yet he displayed none of the usual characteristic concomitants of youth. Neither women, nor play, nor the allurements of the turf, nor the exhibitions of the theatre, nor the sports of the field, nor pleasure under any form, interfered with his official duties. Wine, which his constitution demanded as a stimulus, rarely led him into any excess; and the companions of his convivial hours were not numerous. His elevated, ambitious mind, which grasped at solid power, was superior to the trappings of vanity. Unlike Sir Robert Walpole and Lord North, both of whom aspired to, and obtained, the distinction of *the garter*, Pitt desired to remain a commoner without decoration. At a subsequent period, when the king offered to confer on him that splendid ornament, he declined it, and only besought of his majesty to bestow it on the Earl of Chatham; thus preferring the chief of his family to himself.

His magnanimous contempt of money, exemplified in giving the clerkship of the pells to Colonel Barré, (though it was a place in the exchequer, a department over which he personally presided, and the patronage of which belonged to him;) this extraordinary act of renunciation,



scarcely exceeded by the brightest models in antiquity, extorted universal applause. Negligent however as he was of his own interests, he manifested the utmost vigilance in protecting those of the public. Under his administration, the government securities had risen to a height unknown since the commencement of the American war; and the institution of a sinking fund of one million, had given a stability to credit, which rendered him most popular on the Royal Exchange. In the management of parliament, he had hardly found it necessary, as yet, to have recourse to the arts of corruption. His late successful interference in the Dutch affairs, though, as he modestly owned in the house of commons, when discussing the subject, "it had turned out so fortunate for Great Britain, rather from an extraordinary combination of circumstances than from any other cause," yet had raised him to an unprecedented point of general confidence. In making this recognition of Pitt's merits, I am not impelled by any partiality. For Lord North, and for Lord Sackville, I nourished great predilection; but towards Pitt I felt none, except the obligation imposed on me to write truth. In fact, I rendered *him* far more service than he ever rendered *me*.

In one point of view, and in one only, this great minister might be said to stand on lower ground than some of his predecessors: I mean,

royal favour. No man can suppose that he was considered by George the Third with the affectionate preference that he exhibited for the Earl of Bute. I have indeed always placed that nobleman in the list of favourites, rather than of public functionaries. He ranks rather with Carr and Villiers, than with the Danbys, the Godolphins, or the Harleys. Wilkes, when attacking Lord Bute, ascended to the time of Edward the Third, in order to find his parallel in the person of Roger Mortimer. But never did the king regard Mr. Pitt with the same warm feelings of kindness as he displayed towards Lord North, who was naturally and constitutionally gay; facetious, yet respectful; and blessed with an unalterable suavity of temper. Pitt's manners were stiff, retired, without unction or grace. On some occasions he dictated, while on others he refused to yield, even in matters painfully affecting the sovereign. It is well known that very sharp dialogues took place in the closet between them, *previous* to 1793. *After* that period, when the Duke of York commanded in the Netherlands, while Lord Chatham presided at the admiralty; altercations, accompanied by mutual recrimination, more than once arose, of the most personal description. I could state particulars.

In permitting Mr. Hastings to be impeached, and in supporting the prosecution, Pitt rudely shocked the king's opinions, who always esteemed

the governor-general as one of his most able, meritorious, and ill-used subjects. Perhaps Pitt is to be admired for the line of conduct that he adopted; but it could not be acceptable at St. James's. In truth, Pitt was not made to be loved. Admiration and respect followed him wherever he appeared, but not general attachment. He possessed, however, an invaluable ally in Fox, from whose power he had rescued the sovereign, by exertions which *he* only could have successfully made, and of which service the king retained the strongest sense. He was indeed well aware that a rupture with his minister would not only be attended by the loss of that popularity which since the close of the American war he had acquired, but must probably necessitate him to return to his former bondage under the *coalition*. In the year 1801, when Pitt and his colleagues resigned, it was not Hastings, or Lord Chatham, or the Duke of York, or temporal concerns of any description, that formed the matter in dispute between them. A higher subject, one which affected his coronation oath, superseded in the king's estimation all sublunary political considerations. He had besides with great ability provided a successor for Pitt, in the person of Addington, to whom he gently and dexterously *transferred* the administration, leaving Fox seated where he was antecedently, on the opposition bench.

*4th February.*—As the last discussions which took place previous to the adjournment regarded Sir Elijah Impey ; so one of the earliest subjects of debate in the house of commons, when that assembly met again, was his prosecution. Sir Elijah himself being permitted to appear at the bar, delivered a very able and impressive answer to the charges presented against him. The trial and execution of Nundcomar constituting the heaviest allegation, he directed his principal efforts to clear himself from the guilt commonly attached to that act. It had been generally reported and credited, that Lord Mansfield, who was then justly considered as the greatest authority on all matters of criminal law, declared “the execution of Nundcomar to have been a *legal murder*.” In order to erase the impression made by an opinion from which there could have been no appeal, Sir Elijah informed the house, that having written a letter on the subject to the nobleman in question, he had received an answer from his lordship, positively declaring that he had never used any such expression. But the chief justice of the King’s Bench limited himself to the bare denial, without subjoining the slightest approbation of the judicial proceedings instituted against the unfortunate rajah. Sir Elijah likewise produced other high testimonials to his official character and conduct, while at the head of the courts of judicature in Bengal ; including particularly, if I recollect right,

the celebrated names of Blackstone and of Dunning. After having commented with great ability on the trial itself, and read the conclusion of the charge that he delivered on the occasion, from the bench, to the jury; which he cited as a proof of his having given the prisoner every fair chance for his life; he observed that the sentence pronounced was unanimous. "If therefore," concluded he, "*I am guilty, the other judges* who presided in that court participate the criminality with me. I was nevertheless suffered to remain in India as chief justice, near six years afterwards; and the other judges still remain at this hour in Bengal, distributing justice, though their hands have been dipped in blood. But is it credible that four men of unspotted reputation down to Nundcomar's conviction, should at once become so depraved as to join in the commission of murder? However feeble therefore may be *my* defence, I trust that when *they* come to this bar, *their* arguments will have more force, and will sustain whatever *I*, in my present reply, have left weak or inadequate."

7th February.—These facts and arguments, which, it must be admitted, were not destitute of legal or of moral weight, received still further corroboration when Sir Elijah entered a second time on his defence. I knew him personally, and I always entertained strong prejudices in his disfavour;—prejudices, which neither the expres-

sion of his countenance, nor his manners, tended to dispel. Yet truth compels me to declare, that certain passages in his appeal to the house of commons reminded me of Lord Strafford's eloquent address to his judges in 1641. "Is it intended, Mr. Speaker," said he, "by accumulating articles of accusation against me, charging me exclusively with acts in which the other judges equally participated, to induce or compel me to fly my country? Do my accusers hope that I will not come forward to refute them? Can it answer the purposes of public justice, to bring against me such a mass of falsehood and of misrepresentation?—I have much at stake. I have moreover ten children, for whose provision it is equally my duty and my wish to preserve my fortune. But I will sacrifice that fortune to the preservation of my character. No child of mine shall blush to acknowledge me for his father!" The Speaker, by order of the house, having demanded of him how soon he would be ready to reply to the remaining charges; "My mind," replied he, "is so unhinged by the imputation of having legally murdered Nundcomar, and my health is so deeply affected by such an accusation, that I find it impossible to exert myself in my defence against the other articles, till a decision has taken place respecting the leading charge. It is of a deep cast, and on it I have concentrated my attention. With respect to the minor charges, I hold myself

ready to answer them whenever the house shall call on me." Pitt having instantly moved to comply with Sir Elijah's request, Elliot, desirous to avoid a division which would unquestionably be carried against him, reluctantly assented to the proposition.

Violent personal altercations nevertheless accompanied every stage of the prosecution. Already the truth of Lord Mansfield's profound observation on the essential difference between *criminal* and *political justice* began to be fully exemplified. Eloquence might induce a legislative assembly, unrestrained in its proceedings by legal forms, to accuse a *governor-general* of having committed criminal acts in his *political* capacity, because the crimes imputed were in themselves vague and indefinite. But, in order to impeach a *chief justice* of having been corrupt or oppressive while sitting on the bench, it became necessary not only to adduce evidence the most formal and defined, but to follow the ordinary rules laid down in courts of law. To these fetters, the prosecutors very unwillingly submitted. Impey's recent defence at the bar had produced a strong sensation in his favour, and effected a temporary revulsion in popular opinion. He enjoyed, moreover, an advantage denied to Hastings; namely, that he belonged to a learned profession, the individuals composing which body assembled round him as a sort of guard, ready to defend him

against his accusers. Francis having moved to *require* the delivery of a paper which Sir Elijah had read in his exculpation, and the solicitor-general opposing its forced production, as subversive of every principle of justice; Francis launched out in a tone of indignant complaint. "A week ago," exclaimed he, "scarcely an individual was to be found who did not esteem Sir Elijah Impey highly criminal. On a sudden, the tide is turned, and *tenderness* is to be manifested towards him. We behold a phalanx drawn up on the other side. Whole bands of learned counsel, even *judges* themselves, flock down to support him, to welcome him with cheers, and to encourage him, not merely with the smiles, but with the *halloo* of government."

A cry of Order! resounding from the ministerial side of the house, Pitt immediately rose, and observed that such language he never could hear without feelings of abhorrence. "What!" continued he, "when a person accused of charges the most flagrant stands here for the first time on his defence, is it to be asserted that no *tenderness* should be shown him?" Fox and Burke persisting, nevertheless, to compel the production of the document in question, the master of the rolls (Kenyon) interposed. He had entered the house while Francis was on his legs, and as he advanced up the floor, imperfectly heard the accusation levelled against the *judges*. Irascible as Kenyon



was from constitution, and upright from character, he could not tamely submit to an imputation which personally affected him. "If," exclaimed he, "that honourable gentleman is really the immaculate person which his friends describe him to be, it ill befits him to charge bad intentions on other men; and while he reprobates Sir Elijah Impey's conduct, become himself the accuser of a whole profession." Burke desiring to be informed from legal authority, how far papers not proved authentic could furnish matter of proof; and what evidence would be admissible, or inadmissible, at the bar of the lords; the master of the rolls answered, that the judges would be ready to give their opinion on every point submitted to them. "Where disputes arise," continued he, "the law will be pronounced from the woolsack; and whatever is so pronounced must be regarded as law." Far from acquiescing in this doctrine, Burke utterly denied its validity. "I have," said he, "contended, and successfully contended, against the unanimous opinion of the judges. If I think their opinion wrong, I will again contend against their determination. The learned gentleman appears to me to hold their decision in much too high veneration. He is, I believe, eagerly looking to become one of that body. I hope, however, that he will continue some time longer in his present probationary state, performing legal quarantine for the advantage of his health and constitution." These allu-

sions related to the negotiation for Kenyon's elevation to the office of chief justice of the King's Bench, Lord Mansfield's age and infirmities rendering necessary his resignation. The business was not finally effectuated till about four months afterwards, when Kenyon became a peer and chief justice.

Francis having defended with much warmth his own conduct as a member of the supreme council of Bengal, concluded by making some querulous reflections on his actual situation. "I deplore," said he, "the unfortunate event of my having ever embarked for India, *where I sacrificed every object to the performance of my duty*; and on returning to this country, what has been my reception? Instead of receiving acknowledgments, I am made the object of party rancour." These lamentations, which, while they exhibited his own disinterestedness, reproached the public insensibility to it, did not, however, pass without notice. Major Scott, who accurately knew the only modes in which a large fortune could be accumulated in a short space of time on the banks of the Ganges, coming forward; "Before," observed he, "I can join in applauding the honourable gentleman's integrity, I require proof of the fact itself, in the only way which can produce conviction. Let him make a fair and candid declaration, as Lord Macartney has done! Let him state that he quitted England, *in debt*, a few years ago; that he remained *only six years in India*; that his ex-

pences at home and abroad during the time amounted to a certain specified sum; and that his fortune is barely the difference between the amount of his expences and the remainder of his salary as a supreme councillor. Until he gives this test of his integrity, I shall set little value on the panegyrics of his friends." Francis made no reply to Scott's proposition, nor manifested any inclination to submit to such a disclosure. Fox persisting to *require* the production from Sir Elijah Impey of the paper to which allusion had been so often made, and Pitt as pertinaciously resisting it, a division ensued, when nearly three to one supported the minister. But Impey, on being called to the bar, and asked by the Speaker whether he had any objection to deliver in a copy of the document, replied that he would most readily present it on the ensuing day.

*18th February.* — While the house of commons was thus engaged, the trial of Hastings at length commenced in Westminster Hall. It formed a very imposing and august spectacle. In that immense fabric, which carried back the mind of the spectator to the Plantagenet and Norman princes, by whom it was constructed or repaired at distant periods of our history, almost all the rank and talents, as well as much of the beauty of the country, were assembled. The queen, accompanied by her four eldest daughters,

distinguished it with her presence. They were seated in the Duke of Newcastle's box, who, as auditor of the exchequer, possessed in virtue of his office a distinguished portion of the gallery. Charles the First, as well as Henrietta Maria his consort, were present, as we know, throughout the whole trial of the Earl of Strafford, concealed in a close gallery of Westminster Hall. But George the Third did not think proper to imitate the example of his predecessor. He never once visited the court before which Hastings appeared, from the commencement to the close of the judicial proceedings, though they were protracted during successive years. The Prince of Wales, on the contrary, closely connected as he was with all the chiefs of opposition, lent his countenance to the prosecution by walking at the head of the peers, to the number of more than one hundred and fifty. The whole British peerage did not at that time exceed two hundred and twenty; while they now fall little short of three hundred. Notwithstanding all the precautions used for warming the hall, a cold damp vapour, augmented by the gloom of the season, pervaded the edifice. In the midst of this vast assembly, the late governor-general of India presented himself, accompanied or followed by his counsel, Law, Plumer, and Dallas. Erskine, who, ten years earlier, had first attracted public attention by his defence of Admiral Keppel, might have been retained

on the present occasion. Never, perhaps, had a more ample subject presented itself for the display of that impassioned, nervous, and glowing appeal to the human mind, which characterized Erskine's oratory! But his personal habits of private, as well as of political friendship with Fox, and the other leaders of the prosecution, induced him to decline the office of Hastings's advocate.

Precluded from availing himself of such assistance, Hastings made the best selection then permitted by the state of the bar. Law, who has since risen to the distinguished employment successively filled before him by the Earl of Mansfield and Lord Kenyon, possessed eminent abilities. But he wanted the refinement of Erskine, who, though driven by necessity to seek support from his exertions as a barrister, never forgot that he was a gentleman, and a man of quality. Law, on the contrary, when elevated to the peerage, retained and exhibited all the coarse breeding of his natural character and habits. Not less irascible than Kenyon, he was far more intractable. Kenyon, it is true, sometimes gave way to his indignation, while seated on the bench, in his judicial capacity; but, as a member of the upper house, I never recollect his having violated the decorum usually observed in that assembly. Lord Ellenborough, on more than one occasion, burst forth into transports of anger, accompanied

with language such as is seldom heard even in the most obscure courts of Lincoln's Inn, or of the Temple. I allude in particular to the expressions that fell from him on the debate respecting the compensation given by Pitt to the Duke of Athol for his seignorial rights in the Isle of Man. I think it took place in the summer of 1805, only a few months before that minister's decease. Not that I approve of the measure, which I have always considered as one of the most censurable ever adopted by Pitt. But the epithets affixed to it by the chief justice of the King's Bench appeared so unbecoming, as to induce Lord Mulgrave to remind him that he was addressing peers, not lawyers. Nor did the sentence which he pronounced upon Lord Cochrane, for that nobleman's participation in the memorable and infamous "hoax" practised on the Stock Exchange, excite less condemnation. Such, indeed, was its severity, as effectually to prevent its being carried into complete execution. Notwithstanding these defects of character and deportment, he proved himself highly qualified for the great post that he filled during near seventeen years of the present reign. Plumer and Dallas, though neither of them were men of brilliant talents, have deservedly attained, and at this hour continue to occupy, two of the greatest situations in the profession of the law.

*15th—22nd February.*—The attention of the

metropolis now became centered on Westminster Hall. Burke, who led the way in the proceedings, rising on the third day of the trial, commenced an oration unequalled, I believe, either in antiquity, or in any modern period of time. Those who most disapproved the impeachment, yet were not less sensible on that account to the magnificent structure of ideas, the vast series of facts, the prodigious grasp of his mind which could arrange, and his memory which could retain, such a multitude of transactions. If we further reflect, that Burke had never visited the scene which he thus presented before the minds of his audience in colours the most glowing, we shall find new cause for admiration of the mighty faculties conferred on him by Nature. The illustrious orator,

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—“*Quem mirabantur Athenæ*

*Torrentem, et pleni moderantem fræna theatri,*”

had personally seen Macedonia, had visited Pella, and had conversed with Philip, against whom he declaimed. Cicero had been quæstor in Sicily before he undertook the attack of Verres, who exercised the office of prætor in that island. But Burke knew Bengal only by report, and had never beheld either Mahomet Reza Cawn, or Nund-comar, or Gunga Govind Sing, the agents, enemies, or ministers of the governor-general. The historical and geographical accuracy which he exhibited while narrating the principal events

that took place in the dominions subjected to the East India Company, from their original conquest by Clive, down to the recent period when Hastings returned to Europe, afforded fresh matter of wonder. Four days did he continue to supply this lucid stream of information. At the conclusion of the third morning, it is true that his bodily powers becoming unequal longer to sustain so arduous an effort, he was compelled by indisposition to postpone his further observations. But, resuming with new vigour the task on the following day, he finally accomplished it. His termination, if it was not ludicrous,—for extremes touch,—was appalling; when he at last impeached Hastings, not only as state criminals had formerly been accused under the Stuarts and the Tudors, “in the name of the commons of England in parliament assembled:” he arraigned the governor-general “in the name of all the commons of Great Britain, of the people of India, and finally, in the name of human nature itself.”

I was present, as a member of the lower house, during a considerable part of the time which elapsed between the commencement and the conclusion of Burke's speech; or rather, of his four harangues. It would be difficult to convey an idea of the agitation, distress, and horror excited among the female part of his audience, by his statement of the atrocities, and in many instances, of the deeds of blood, perpetrated, as he asserted,



by Hastings's connivance, or by his express commands. Curiosity naturally attracted, on each successive day, a vast proportion of females, many of whom were peeresses, or women of the highest condition. No sooner, however, had the emotions produced by Burke's description in some measure subsided, than Fox, addressing the chancellor, attempted to lay down as a principle, that the managers intended to substantiate each charge *separately*; to hear Hastings's defence, as well as evidence; and to reply:—by this mode of accusation, proceeding to a conclusion on every *specific* article, previous to opening another head of charge. Law strongly objecting, as counsel for the prisoner, to such a form of proceeding, which he declared to be subversive of all equity, or the practice of judicial courts; Fox undertook to justify it by precedents. Nor did he blush to cite the cases of Cranfield, Earl of Middlesex, and of the celebrated Lord Strafford, as precedents in favour of his proposition. Two more tyrannical and oppressive examples of parliamentary, or popular violence, under the forms of law, could not have been selected from our annals since the death of Elizabeth. The first, which took place in 1624, set on foot by the vindictive animosity of Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, was marked in its progress, not less than in its conclusion, by every characteristic of iniquity and oppression. So contrary to all principles of justice did the

fine inflicted on the Earl of Middlesex appear to Charles the First, that one of the earliest acts of his reign was its remission. It is unnecessary to say a word on the trial of Strafford, which formed the prelude to civil war, and was followed within eight years by the execution of the king his master. Yet on such a basis, wholly inapplicable to the asserted crimes or misdemeanors of Hastings, did the managers pretend to found their reasonings; and to prosecute the governor-general of India in Westminster Hall, for alledged offences committed in his official capacity, many years antecedent, in the centre of Asia.

The peers appeared to have formed other ideas of their own duty, dignity, and becoming mode of procedure. Having withdrawn to their own house, a debate of great interest arose two days afterwards, which was begun by Lord Thurlow, who stated the object of discussion with his characteristic ability. Nor, though he reprobated the impeachment, (as was well known,) individually, did he pronounce a less eloquent eulogium on Burke's splendid exhibition of talent. But he at the same time declared that the demand made by Hastings's counsel was a right, not an indulgence; adding, that he could conceive no principle on which the defence could be conducted, except one; namely, "to oblige the managers to complete the whole of their case, previous to a word being uttered in exculpation of the prisoner."

Lord Loughborough having endeavoured to demonstrate that the ordinary rules of proceeding in criminal law did not apply to parliamentary impeachment, which could not be shackled by the forms observed in the courts below ; the chancellor rose a second time. " My lords," said he, " with respect to the law and usage of parliament, I utterly disclaim all knowledge of such law. *It has no existence.* True it is, that in times of despotism, or of popular fury, when, to impeach an individual, was to crush him by the strong hand of power, of tumult, or of violence, the law and usage of parliament were quoted in order to justify the most iniquitous or atrocious acts. But, in these days of light, and of constitutional government, I trust that no man will be tried except by the law of the land ; a system admirably calculated to protect innocence, and to punish crime."

Having subsequently shewn from a review of all the state trials under the Stuart reigns, even down to that of Sacheverel inclusive, that in every instance were to be found the strongest marks of tyranny, injustice, and oppression ; " In the present impeachment," concluded Lord Thurlow, " I trust your lordships will not depart from the recognized established laws of the land. The commons may impeach : your lordships are to try the cause. And the same rules of evidence, the same legal forms which obtain in the courts below, will, I am confident, be observed by this

assembly." So enlightened a comment on Lord Mansfield's principle respecting the difference between *criminal* and *political* justice, proved irresistible. Though the first minister had joined in the impeachment, yet only thirty-three peers could be found to sustain Lord Loughborough, while eighty-eight supported the chancellor. When this decision was communicated by him to the managers in Westminster Hall on the following day, Fox, speaking as their organ, arraigned it in the warmest terms. Renouncing the enlarged principles of constitutional freedom by which he had always pretended to regulate his public conduct, he undertook to claim, and to defend, one of the most odious rights ever exercised by the house of commons. I mean, the privilege of bringing up new articles of impeachment *at any time*; — not only while the prisoner was engaged in *making* his defence, but even when his defence should be *concluded*.

This pretended right, worthy only of the worst periods of our history, did not however receive from the chancellor the slightest mark of assent or approbation. Fox entered next on the subject of trials by impeachment, declaring them to form a characteristic feature of our constitution. Then diverging to *the law and usage of parliament*, he maintained, "in opposition to opinions held elsewhere, that it formed one of the most important and valuable branches of the law of the land:"

thus lending the support of his transcendent talents, to sustain a doctrine the most oppressive to the subject. Such was Fox, who, throughout his whole life, alternately attacked or defended the same measures, according to the position in which he stood; trusting to his own ability or eloquence, to cover all departures from consistency! These preliminaries being laid down, he proceeded to open the charge against Hastings for his treatment of Cheyt Sing, the Rajah of Benares. His speech, which lasted several hours, and which formed nearly a repetition of that addressed by him to the house of commons on the same subject, twenty months earlier, in June 1786, justly excited, as a composition, great admiration.

*25th February—1st March.*—At length towards the close of the month of February, commenced the business of the session. A very delicate, doubtful, and important subject of discussion had unexpectedly arisen between the administration, or rather, between the Board of East India Control, and the Court of Directors. Pitt having originally expelled Fox from power, by joining the latter corporate body, when menaced with extinction by *the coalition ministers*; it might naturally have been expected that he would not lightly quit so advantageous a political ground. Yet, in the lapse of about four years, the two heads of party seemed to have changed sides;

Fox now sustaining the East India Company, while Pitt undertook to restrain their authority. In order to explain how so improbable a transmutation could take place, it is necessary to state, that during the period when war seemed to impend as a consequence of our interference in the affairs of Holland, the British government, apprehensive for the safety of our Eastern possessions, determined on sending out four regiments to that quarter of the globe. The directors, impressed with the same fears, not only acquiesced in the measure, but expressed their satisfaction at its adoption. When the danger was however surmounted, ministers still persisting in their original intention with a view permanently to strengthen the forces in India, a violent opposition arose in Leadenhall-street. The court of directors even proceeded so far as to refuse receiving on board their ships the royal troops. Under these circumstances, no possible mode of speedily terminating the dispute presented itself, except by a recourse to parliament. But there were two ways in which government might obtain from the legislature the necessary powers. One, by a *bill enacting*, or conferring them; the other, by a *declaratory bill*, explaining and removing doubts relative to the right vested in the commissioners by the act of 1784; which, it was now maintained from the treasury bench, had fully empowered the board of control to exercise an

unlimited command over the military and political concerns of India. The latter alternative was adopted by Pitt, though it evidently opened a wide field for controversy, as it placed Fox in the very position which the chancellor of the exchequer had himself occupied, and on which his ministerial greatness had been constructed; namely, the defence of the East India Company, against violence on the part of the servants of the crown.

From the first moment that the minister moved for leave to bring in his projected *bill*, down to the time of its being carried to the house of peers, during a period of near three weeks, the most determined opposition was experienced from a variety of quarters. It originated not merely from Fox, nor was it limited to his adherents. Enemies started up among the supporters of administration, men of the most independent minds and fortunes. Barré, whose loss of sight, when added to age and decay, seldom allowed him to attend in his place, rose more than once to reprobate and expose the measure. Baring, then one of the court of directors, displayed the same resistance. Notwithstanding his deafness, which infirmity had recently subjected him to the sarcastic edge of Sheridan's wit, few individuals in that assembly could contend with him in financial knowledge and commercial information. Like Barré, he belonged to the Marquis of Lansdown's little band.

Fullarton, whose duel with Lord Shelburne rendered him known early in life ; who had subsequently distinguished himself on the theatre of India, where he commanded a considerable body of troops during the war with Hyder Ally ; and who, whenever he spoke, manifested no ordinary talents ; opposed the *bill* with his utmost force. I had the happiness to enjoy a place in his friendship ; and though towards the close of his career, when acting as one of the three royal commissioners in the island of Trinidad, the excess of his zeal during the contest in which he there engaged with General Picton formed subject of regret ; yet I seize with pleasure the present occasion to commemorate his numerous virtues, his disinterestedness, and elevation of character. Flood, whose rivalry and animosity to Grattan in the Irish house of commons produced so many animated scenes within those walls ; a man of the most forbidding physiognomy, but endowed with great powers of intellect ; presenting himself on this occasion, as he had done some years earlier, in December 1783, when he opposed Fox's " East India Bill," now inveighed against Pitt's measure, as an insidious, rapacious, and unjustifiable act of power.

These formidable opponents were joined by others not less respectable. " The bill that I approved in 1783," said Powis, " possessed all the characteristic features of its author's mind, bold,



open, and manly. It now becomes evident that the measure which I then opposed was founded in duplicity and fraud, undermining the charter which it pretended to support." Sir Edward Astley, member for the county of Norfolk, descended of an antient and opulent family, renowned for loyalty; himself a plain, unlettered country gentleman, of very moderate talents, but of the most upright views; was heard with much attention. Scarcely did he rise in general more than once or twice throughout a whole session, on the subject of a turnpike bill, or some local business affecting his constituents. "I voted," exclaimed he, "for the present chancellor of the exchequer's India Bill, because I was given to understand that it formed the reverse of the *bill* which preceded it. But I now find that there is very little difference between them. The one seems to be nearly as bad as the other. I have not withdrawn my confidence from him, but *I wish he would keep better company. In other words, I distrust his colleagues.*" This severe reflection, levelled principally, or rather exclusively, at Dundas, could not be mistaken. Even Pulteney, a man whose vast property and strong sense gave weight to his opinions, declared himself adverse to the measure. He had contributed, both by his vote and by his pen, to overturn Fox's memorable *bill*. His opposition, therefore, painfully affected ministers. Yet, unlike Sir Edward Astley, he qualified

his line of action by compliments to Dundas on his integrity, and assiduity at the board of control. Nor did he omit to give his tribute of praise to Pitt's ministerial character and conduct. Four years later, his daughter was raised to the British peerage as a baroness, and she subsequently attained by creation to the rank of a countess. Sir Edward Astley, whose ancestors fought and bled in the royal cause under Charles the First, died a commoner. Even Major Scott, little as he might incline to support Hastings's prosecutors, yet spoke repeatedly in terms of strong condemnation against the pending *bill*.

Assailed from so many unexpected quarters, the minister nevertheless could boast of some able supporters. At their head stood Scott, who at the present hour, far advanced as he is in life, fills with undiminished powers of mind the high employment of chancellor. Pitt only waited for Lord Mansfield's resignation, to make him solicitor-general. Francis, a man little inclined to indulge in compliment towards his opponents, yet did justice to Scott. During the debates that arose on the present occasion, Francis observed, "We have among us a learned person, who is universally considered as the great luminary of the law; whose opinions are oracles; to whose information and authority, all his own profession look up with reverence." No member of the long robe took a more active part in the debates than Hardinge;

Not content with defending and justifying the ministerial measure, he attacked Powis in a manner so personal as to excite general censure. Two, and *only* two directors of the East India Company, spoke in commendation of the bill.

Among the county members, I recollect Rolle alone who ventured to stand forward in defence of Pitt; while Bastard, his colleague, spoke as well as voted on the opposite side. Their fate, indeed, proved different;—Rolle entering the house of peers, eight years afterwards; while Bastard continued to represent the county of Devon down to the period of his decease, only a short time ago.

*3rd March.*—A petition against the *bill* having been presented by the East India Company, Erskine was heard as their counsel at the bar. Devoted to Fox, ardent in his temper, and incapable of being awed or intimidated by the presence of any assembly; Erskine, who, during the short time that he represented Portsmouth in the last parliament, had signalized himself by the defence of Fox's "East India Bill," resumed in his legal capacity the consideration of the same subject. Spurning the limits within which advocates are usually confined when pleading before the house of commons, he ventured not only to eulogize in the warmest terms the rejected measure of his friend, but to treat the bill of 1784 as a vile imposture practised on a credulous nation. The

murmurs of various members, indignant at such an infraction of decorum, at length compelled the Speaker to interpose his authority, in order to repress Erskine's prurience. Affecting to apologize, while he at the same time took occasion to renew the offence; "If," observed he, "Mr. Speaker, I have been guilty of any irregularity, it arises solely from a diminution of that respect which I was accustomed to feel towards this assembly before it was shorn of its dignity; but which no longer animates me since the assumption of the extraordinary powers arrogated and exercised by the present board of control." Sentiments so insulting would probably have attracted an expression of ministerial indignation on their author's head, if it had not been repressed by the peculiar circumstances of the case. Pitt beheld himself in a situation far more perilous than any that had occurred since his elevation to the head of the treasury. The *Westminster scrutiny*, oppressive as it was, had been undertaken immediately after the overthrow of the "*coalition*" ministry, during the intoxication incident to his early popularity. His *Irish propositions* were rejected by the parliament of *that* country, not here in Westminster; and from the prosecution of the Duke of Richmond's plan of *fortifying the dock-yards*, he had finally desisted, when warned by the casting vote in the house of commons. But, in the present instance, if outnumbered by

the opposers of the *bill*, no honourable retreat remained for him; nor was it easy to conceive how, if defeated, he could even with dignity continue in office. As he had risen to power by *one* India Bill, he might fall by *another*.

*5th March.* — Influenced by these reflections, which imperiously suggested themselves to his mind, Pitt found his best auxiliary, not in the talents of his supporters, nor even in his own eloquence, but in his *character*. Never perhaps was the value of integrity, moderation, and correct deportment, more forcibly exemplified than in the instance before us! Fox might, and I believe did possess, the first of those qualities in as eminent a degree; but he wanted the two latter recommendations to royal and to national favour. At the end of four years it had become demonstrated that the two East India Bills, (that of Fox, and that of Pitt,) differed more from each other in name than in reality. Yet the discovery, though it shook, did not overturn the minister; because the East India Company, the two houses of parliament, and the country at large, however undeceived they might be, were by no means disposed to transfer the reins of government to Fox and his adherents. Pitt, notwithstanding the exertions which he made to convince, and to retain his friends, beheld himself abandoned by many individuals who usually supported him. However much he strove to conceal

his emotions on a point so humiliating to his haughty mind, he nevertheless felt it deeply;—for no minister ever more justly appreciated the importance of character. Conscious of the dangerous nature of the ground which he had to maintain, he tried to prove that the powers now assumed by the board of control were virtually, if not specifically vested in the commissioners, by the act of 1784. But, able and persuasive as Pitt was, his oratory failed of its usual effect. Sheridan, directing his keen jests against the head of the India Board, observed that Dundas had formerly compared the commissioners constituted by Fox's *Bill* to seven doctors and eight apothecaries prescribing for one poor patient. "Yet," continued he, "their prescriptions were at least less nauseous than the dose now mixing by the learned *Doctor of Control*, who, in the spirit of a political quack, exhorts his patient to swallow it; assuring him that there is no occasion for his confining himself at home, but that he may safely go about his business as usual. This new sovereign remedy will no doubt be soon advertized, under the title of *Scotch Pills for every sort of Oriental disorder*."

Irritating as were such observations, Fox's insulting comments on the humbled situation of the minister sunk still deeper into his mind. "Whence arises," exclaimed Fox, "so determined an opposition to the present measure? Have the chancellor of the exchequer's friends

deserted him? No! For, even now, they declare that they have confidence in *his* integrity. What, then, is the cause of this change? Why, in the good sense of the house, because the present *bill* has removed the film from before their eyes, while it begins to explain to the whole kingdom its destructive tendency." After alluding in terms of contemptuous ridicule to the indifference about power which Dundas affected to feel, Fox inveighed with great animation against a *declaratory* bill. "The crown and the East India Company," observed he, "are at variance on a disputed principle. Why not try the fact in a court of law? 'No,' says the minister: 'in a court of law I can exercise no influence; in the house of commons I can.' What must such an act be denominated except oppression! But, I trust, there is virtue enough yet remaining in this assembly to resist its further progress." The hour was very late when Fox sate down; and as the impression which he had made could not admit of a doubt, every eye became directed to the treasury bench, in expectation that Pitt would endeavour to efface it. Instead, however, of rising, he alledged personal indisposition as the reason of his silence; promising nevertheless to answer his antagonist's arguments in the future stages of the *bill*. I scarcely recollect a division taking place under more discouraging circumstances for administration since Pitt's elevation to

power. Nor did the result prove that Fox had miscalculated his force. Though three hundred and twelve persons voted, the minister carried the question only by a majority of *fifty-seven*. Such a triumph partook of defeat, and clearly manifested how little he could trust to the support which he had been accustomed to receive within those walls, unless he modified the measure under discussion. A defection of less than thirty members, if they joined Fox, would have left Pitt in a minority; and that defection was by no means impossible.

*7th March.*—Yielding unquestionably to the considerations dictated by his present position, Pitt resolved therefore, instead of advancing in a path where his popularity, if not his power, might be lost, to retrace his steps. Doubtless too he felt that he was engaged in Dundas's cause even more than in his own; since the real authority of the India Board resided, not in the first lord of the treasury, nor still less in Lord Sydney, the nominal president, but in Dundas. Neither could Pitt be insensible, that however eminent were the talents of that ambitious, aspiring, and able advocate; however closely cemented might be their personal friendship, and however necessary to administration were his exertions and eloquence in parliament; yet his moral reputation fell below his political ability. Contrary to his usual practice, Pitt therefore opened



the discussion, on the evening when it was moved "to bring up the report of the *bill*." Assuming a tone and a language foreign to his disposition, he endeavoured to regain the eminence which he had occupied before the introduction of the present obnoxious measure. Having first conciliated his hearers, he next addressed himself to their understanding; and while he vindicated the *bill* which he had brought forward, professed nevertheless his anxious desire to propose, as well as to adopt, every clause, and every mode of prevention, against the apprehended danger to the constitution. "If," exclaimed he, "checks upon patronage are tendered, let them come from whatever side of this assembly they may, or from whatever individual however hostile, accompanied by whatever language, I will gladly receive them. I shall even regard the man who proposes them as my *best friend*, because he will have proved that he is a friend to the British constitution." The conclusion of his speech, most personal to Fox, "whom," he said, "that house had dethroned, four years before, from his high seat of despotism," was filled with reiterated declarations that he never would consent to or permit the introduction of patronage under any form. To Pulteney he particularly addressed himself, in terms calculated to obviate that member's objections to the measure; and finally, as the best proof of his desire to submit it to cen-

sure or emendation, he moved "to recommit the bill."

Never did Pitt, at any period of his eventful life, exhibit a stronger proof of his consummate judgment than in adopting this line of action. It disarmed, and finally defeated opposition; but it could not silence their sarcasms, or their clamours. Sheridan, whose eloquence, abilities, and powers of fancy Pitt recognized; denying him at the same time reason and truth; — Sheridan, indignant at the compliments paid to his talents, at the expence of his morals, retorted on the minister with inconceivable ingenuity and severity. After drawing a masterly picture of Pitt's political life, and stigmatizing the prominent features of his administration; "His friends, nevertheless," continued Sheridan, "boast of his conscience, and always assert that he has been debauched into every act of folly, or of iniquity, that he has committed. They say in his defence, that his conscience has been surprized in the present instance; and that the *bill* now before us has originated, not in wicked intention, but in bad advice. I readily admit that he has people about him who are capable of intentionally misleading him. It constitutes his original crime, that he has connected himself with men from whom no good counsel ever can come; and it is earnestly to be wished, either that his conscience would keep a better look-out, or that he would in

future keep better company." These pointed attacks upon Dundas were followed by reflections not less personal on Pitt himself, as well as on the *bill* under discussion. "The chancellor of the exchequer," observed Sheridan, "originally stole in upon the house this obnoxious measure, without explanation of any kind. He procured it to be read a first, and a second time: but being detected in the fact, his arm arrested, and himself exposed; finding that not only his supporters, but men on all sides have taken alarm; then he comes forward, humbly entreating that it may be checked and guarded in every shape. The *bill*, with its terrors, its arrogance, and its evils, came first; while the checks come behind as a rider. Prerogative foremost: the constitution in the rear."

Burke, engaged as he was in the prosecution of Hastings, attended nevertheless in his place, and joined in the cry against ministers on that memorable night; conscious that the division would decide, not only the fate of the *bill*, but perhaps the duration of administration. Having first directed his animadversions against Dundas, he next turned round upon Pitt. "I congratulate the house," exclaimed he, "that confidence is at length exploded. The minister has himself avowed his distrust of his colleagues, and demanded suspicion from us. Well may the learned gentle-

man who presides over the destinies of the East, be cloathed in sackcloth and ashes! I entreat it may be remembered that the caution comes not from this side of the house, but from the chancellor of the exchequer. He who, forty-eight hours ago, recommended,—nay, bullied us into confidence! But, even when engaged in so humiliating an act, he performs it with an air of pride. He scatters his ashes abroad with dignity, and wears his sackcloth as if it were a robe of purple." This fine portrait, sketched with such ability, bore the closest resemblance to its original. Burke concluded by accusing the minister with the grossest hypocrisy, combined in the present instance with fraud. But all these imputations were swallowed up in the philippic pronounced by Fox. It formed one splendid display of reason, animated by a sentiment allied to triumph. For, though the division that took place ultimately extinguished the hopes of opposition, it could not deprive them of a species of victory. The minister had been humbled, and compelled to adopt the language of a suppliant in order to retain a small majority: while Fox, whose imprudence and ambition originally precipitated him from power, beheld his *bill* rescued in a certain degree from the load of obloquy under which it had so long been overwhelmed. There was indeed something like exultation in his address to

the house, which might be said to resemble the animated apostrophe of a man who unexpectedly emerges out of darkness into light.

"I introduced," said he, "my *bill*, as the only mode of saving the East India Company and their territories from ruin. It produced alarm, and was rejected in another assembly. *What means were set on foot to effect that purpose, though well informed on the subject, I shall not now relate.* But the best panegyric ever delivered on my *bill* has just fallen from the lips of the chancellor of the exchequer himself, conveyed in these finished periods, and in that felicitous order, for which he is so eminently distinguished." Having next contrasted the provisions of his own *bill* with the present declaratory measure before the house, he endeavoured to shew that under every point of view the former was most analogous to the principles of the constitution. "I have been accused," said Fox, "with endeavouring to pluck the crown from his majesty's head. Such language would be more justly applied to the ambition of those who are seated opposite me. When have I conducted myself like a disloyal subject? When did I ever endeavour to diminish the just prerogatives of the crown? I know too well their value. *Those who have poisoned the royal ear*, by suggesting that only one side of the house of commons is loyal to the sovereign, are the real enemies of the constitution. The minister has

by his recent conduct forfeited all claim to the confidence of parliament. Let him at once avow his error, withdraw the present *bill*, and introduce another, adequate to the purposes of saving India !”

This advice had already been tendered to Pitt, in the progress of the debate, from two respectable quarters. I mean, by Bastard and by Pulteney. But as they both accompanied their exhortation with testimonies of the warmest satisfaction at the altered language which he had now thought proper to adopt; conveying withal an indirect assurance that his present concessions might probably secure their vote, or at least their support; he did not think it necessary to stoop to so humiliating an expedient. Neither did he attempt to answer Fox; only declaring that the whole speech just pronounced was, as far as it personally regarded himself, “a foul aspersion on his character.” The division at length took place; when it appeared, that while administration maintained its preceding numbers, the opposition fell off in their supporters; 187 persons voting with government, precisely as on the former evening; but Fox, who then counted 125, could now command only 115. The majority of the minister had therefore augmented from 57 to 67 members.

10th—14th *March*. — Confirmed in office by this proof of parliamentary adherence, and warn-

ed by his recent danger, Pitt now hastened to accomplish his engagement by bringing in a variety of clauses, all calculated to circumscribe the powers which the bill conferred on the board of control. No concessions or limitations could however impose silence on Flood, who maintained that every argument which had been urged against Fox's *bill* applied with equal force to the present measure. "I appeal," exclaimed he, "to any candid man, whether such a difference exists between them as to cause a great ministerial revolution in the country, to convulse the state to its foundation, and to make the sovereign start from his throne. Such were the effects of a former *bill*. Yet how did it essentially differ from the one now before us?" Fox, as if satisfied with the severe discipline which he had administered so recently to the minister, took little part in the debate of that evening. But Pitt's restrictions, spontaneously imposed on his own power, and on that of his colleagues at the India Board, had allayed the effervescence excited in the house, and brought back to his standard various individuals who had absented themselves. On the division, his numbers rose to 210, while the opposition could not reach beyond 122. His *bill* might consequently be regarded as secure. Yet its adversaries inveighed against it with redoubled asperity, down to the last moment that it remained under discussion. A short sus-

pension of public business followed this violent struggle; while, in Westminster Hall, obstacles and delays arose which impeded the progress of Hastings's trial. To Burke and Fox, succeeded Grey; whose eloquence, youth, and figure, attracted a numerous audience, composed indeed frequently more of the wives and daughters of Hastings's judges, than of the judges themselves. Many of the peeresses occupied their seats, session after session, with exemplary patience, curiosity, and perseverance. Throughout the whole month of March, on account of the pressure of parliamentary affairs, scarcely ten days were allotted to the impeachment; nor was it before the middle of April that the second charge, which regarded the Princesses of Oude, was opened, not by Sheridan, but by Adam and Pelham.

*April.* — It is long since I have mentioned even the name of Lord North. His augmenting infirmities, particularly his loss of sight, incapacitated him, without great inconvenience, from attending as a member of parliament. He had not indeed been once seen within the walls of the house of commons during the debates that arose on the *declaratory India Bill*, when his presence and his talents might have been usefully employed for his party. Barré, it is true, who suffered under a similar privation, had taken an active part in those discussions; but, though far more advanced in his career than Lord North, his



robust and athletic frame promised him many years of life. Colonel North supplied his father's vacant seat on the opposition bench. Another luminary of the period of the American war, Rigby, disappeared likewise at this time. I believe, he expired at Bath. Declining health, loss of office,—but, perhaps, more than both, pecuniary embarrassments, arising out of the extensive demands made on him by government, for payment of the balances of national money remaining in his hands;—these combined causes had operated to withdraw him almost altogether from parliament, though he still continued member for Tavistock. He possessed talents for addressing a popular assembly, which were sustained by confidence that nothing could abash. In that quality, he did not yield even to Dundas. Under Lord North's administration, Rigby had occupied a great space in the public mind; but since that time he seemed to have almost become politically extinct, and after his decease was speedily forgotten.

Rigby's death was preceded only a few weeks by that of the Dowager Viscountess Townsend, one of the most distinguished females of the court and reign of George the Second. She attained nearly her eighty-seventh year, but her intellectual faculties had suffered little or no decay. In the empire of mind, she might be said to have occupied the place left vacant by

Lady Mary Wortley Montague, and by Lady Hervey. At Lady Townsend's house in Whitehall, George Selwyn, and a number of other men eminent for wit or talent, were usually to be found, who constituted her evening society. Her father, whose name was Harrison, rose in life by the personal favour of William the Third, leaving to his daughter a fine property, which she bequeathed to Lord John Townsend, her grandson; one of the most gallant, accomplished, highly-informed individuals of his time; the inseparable friend and companion of Fox, throughout all the vicissitudes of his political life. Lady Townsend, besides retaining her mental powers undiminished, lived to see her eldest grandson created an English earl, and her son raised still higher, to the dignity of a British marquis: a circumstance probably without parallel in the peerage of this country. Those titles, as well as the numerous baronies of Plantagenet creation, that unite in the actual representative of the name of Townsend; descended from the illustrious families of Vere, of Devereux, of Compton, and many others; may all be regarded at present as in a state of eclipse. So is the name of Courtenay. Both will probably emerge again under some future sovereign.

Among the persons who in April 1788 made a strong appeal to the public, as candidates for dramatic fame, I must not omit Lady Wallace.

She was one of the three daughters of Sir William Maxwell of Monteith, and a sister of the Duchess of Gordon. Inferior to the duchess in beauty, she possessed nevertheless great personal charms, which were augmented by the eccentric attractions of her deportment and conversation. No woman of condition in my time has ventured to emancipate herself so completely from all the restraints imposed by custom on her sex. I have seen her habited as a man, attending the debates in the house of commons, and seated in the gallery appropriated to strangers. Nor is this extraordinary act by any means the greatest deviation from female decorum which I have known her to commit for the gratification of curiosity or amusement. She was married to Sir Thomas Wallace of Craigie, a Scotch baronet; but she thought proper to prosecute him for adultery, before the court of session; and though the accusation was dismissed, Lady Wallace always continued to live in a state of total separation from her husband. Emulous of attaining the fame of Mrs. Behn and of Mrs. Centlivre, she composed and brought forward at this time a comedy, entitled "The Ton." It was performed three times at Covent-garden theatre; each time, to crowded audiences. I was present at two of the three representations. All the principal characters, male and female, were individuals of fashion: easily recognized by those who knew the town:

The piece wanted neither plot, nor wit, nor movement, nor easy dialogue, nor theatrical effect, though it was in many passages very indelicate; yet not so grossly violating decency as Congreve has done in "Love for Love," and in "The Way of the World;" confessedly two of the finest comedies in the English language, if considered merely as dramatic compositions. But our refined manners and habits will not tolerate the scenes at which the *Belindas* and the *Stellas* of the reign of George the First assisted without repugnance, and almost without a blush. All the efforts of Lady Wallace's friends, however numerous and powerful, with the Duchess of Gordon at their head, could not protect the play, nor secure it from theatrical *damnation*. She never presented another piece to the manager; but her whole life was in itself a perpetual comedy. After the commencement of the French revolution, about the year 1794, she embarked for Hamburgh, professedly with the intention of there meeting and conferring with the ex-patriated French general, Dumourier. Lady Wallace terminated her extraordinary career at Munich, censured for the irregularities of her deportment, and little lamented by her own family.

Scarcely had Pitt surmounted the impediments to the "East India Declaratory Bill," when administration was assailed from another quarter. Lord Howe, who presided at the admiralty board,

having, at the time when a rupture with France was apprehended to be imminent, made a promotion of naval officers, thought fit to pass over more than forty captains, while he selected sixteen for elevation to the rank of admirals. Lord Rawdon, (since created Marquis of Hastings,) a nobleman of generous and elevated feelings, alive to every impulse of wounded honour, conceiving these individuals to have been unjustly superseded, brought the subject before the upper house. But the ministerial influence in that assembly could stand the severest assaults of opposition, and the first lord of the admiralty defended his conduct with reasons of great solidity. Finally, Lord Rawdon's motion for an address to the king, praying that "he would take into his consideration the services of those captains who had been passed over in the late promotion," was negatived without a division. This event happened as early as the 20th of February. Not deterred, however, by the ill success of Lord Rawdon's attempts, Mr. Bastard brought forward the same subject in the house of commons, on the following day. He was a man of ample fortune, of an independent mind, of grave and correct deportment, animated by upright intentions, and possessing a sound, though not a superior understanding. His position, as one of the two members for the county in which was situate Plymouth, with its dock-yards, gave him

no ordinary advantage, when discussing a naval question.

Among the captains who had been passed over in the recent promotion, were two, Balfour and Thompson, who, having received the thanks of the house on the event of the memorable 12th of April 1782, seemed to challenge more respect than their companions. Bastard enlarged on the peculiar hardship of excluding two distinguished officers from the reward of their long services; men who had participated in the defeat of De Grasse. He ventured even to assert that unless some reparation should be made to their injured characters, the service itself would receive an irreparable wound. "Henceforward," exclaimed he, "encrease of fortune, not of fame, will form the object of naval commanders. Servility and meanness must conduct to eminence. He who would rise in the profession, must effect it by running on the errands of the head of the admiralty board; by performing the part of his follower, his flatterer, perhaps of his pimp." He concluded by moving to address his majesty, that "he would confer on Captains Balfour and Thompson some mark of his royal favour." Pitt opposed this proposition by reasons which were unanswerable. Having shewn that it would form an unprecedented interference with the prerogative of the crown, he contended that "even if such a principle could be admitted, yet the house of commons

was incompetent to take upon themselves the selection." He treated with ridicule the idea of making the two captains named by Bastard, subjects of an address to the sovereign for favour, merely because they had been thanked in the lump with all the officers and all the seamen who gained the glorious victory in question. Nor did the chancellor of the exchequer omit to notice with becoming disapprobation, the very gross manner in which had been described the offices necessary to be assumed by candidates for promotion. Such insinuations would indeed have been most unjustly applied to Lord Howe, who was a man of very correct manners; but it did not appear equally certain that some of the qualifications enumerated, might not have formed recommendations to one of his predecessors in the same office, the Earl of Sandwich. Bastard finding that none of the opposition leaders came to his aid, that Lord Hood took part against him, and that the house seemed disinclined to adopt his proposition, withdrew it; stating at the same time his determination to renew it under another form.

*18th April.*—This menace he accomplished, about two months afterwards, when he moved for "the house to resolve itself into a committee, to enquire into the conduct of the admiralty respecting the late naval promotion." The arguments with which he maintained his proposition, were nearly the same as he had used on the pre-

ceding occasion; but the result proved widely different. Many professional men, some of whom were warmly attached to administration, impelled by personal feelings, declared in favour of the *motion*. Sir George Howard, an officer devoted to the crown, and who had been placed at the head of the army, protested that he thought an enquiry could not be refused without the sacrifice of honour and of justice. Other individuals of independent character followed his example. Pitt resisted with great eloquence and ability the tide which set strong against him; combating it by precedents, as well as by arguments; allowing nevertheless, that if the point was agitated within those walls, the present mode formed the only constitutional ground on which the discussion could take place. Fox, concurring in this sentiment, admitted the royal prerogative to be sacred as it regarded the distribution of military honours and rewards. "So firmly am I of that opinion," added he, "that if an address to the crown had been proposed, I could not support it; but the *motion* being for a committee, I shall give my vote in its favour. Because it is the constitutional province of this house to watch over the executive departments, wherever abuse is suspected to exist; and finally to institute enquiry, with a view either to censure, or to punishment." He next proceeded to maintain, that in the recent promotion, the first lord of the admiralty had



acted with partiality and oppression ; or, to use the mildest term which could apply to the act, with caprice. A division took place at a late hour of the morning ; ministers only carrying the question by *sixteen* votes. Bastard was sustained by 134 ; while 150, of which number I was one, followed Pitt. It was, in fact, a defeat to administration ; and the mover, encouraged by such a proof of parliamentary approbation, gave immediate notice that he would speedily bring the matter anew under discussion.

*29th April.*—The third and last debate which arose out of this naval promotion, followed after an interval of about ten days. Neither Pitt nor Fox, neither Dundas nor Sheridan, bore any part in it. Bastard, who had exhausted the subject as a topic of declamation, after a short speech, moved, that it is “injurious to the service, and unjust, to set aside in the promotion to flags, meritorious officers of approved service.” The treasury bench committed its defence principally to Lord Hood. That veteran commander, whose figure, countenance, and manners exhibited the characteristic marks of hard service, had fought his own way up to honours and dignities. It was therefore highly improbable that he would become the apologist of a measure, which violated justice in the persons of men with whom he had trod the quarter-deck during forty years. Yet Lord Hood strenuously vindicated the conduct of the noble-

man presiding at the admiralty. From documents which he produced, it appeared that in almost every past promotion, a greater proportion of captains had been passed by, than included : but, no complaint was to be found of national injury sustained in consequence of such a practice. "The noble viscount," pursued he, "ranks conspicuous in the opinion of the navy, as a brave and skilful seaman. He has hitherto maintained a character of unsullied honour and unimpeached integrity. Can it be supposed that such a man, placed at the head of the naval administration, would abuse his power, and plunge into voluntary disgrace?"

Various naval officers rose during the debate ; every individual of whom, with the single exception of Lord Hood, supported Bastard's *motion*. Macbride, who in a former session had opposed the Duke of Richmond's plan of fortifications, inveighed against the system adopted by Lord Howe. "I stand," exclaimed he, "fortieth on the actual list of post captains, at this time. Before the promotion reaches *me*, I may be worn out ; and consequently I shall be set aside, if only those who can do actual duty are henceforward to expect a flag. Two officers now present, (Lord Hood and Sir Edmund Affleck,) have been deservedly elevated, one to an Irish peerage, the other to the rank of a baronet. Monuments in Westminster Abbey have been voted for two others, who fell gloriously in the action of the

12th of April 1782 : while Captains Balfour and Thompson, who equally signalized themselves on that occasion, are kicked out of the service." Lord Mulgrave stood precisely in a similar predicament with Macbride ; his commission, as a post captain, bearing date on one and the same day. During the *first* discussion respecting the promotions made by Lord Howe, Lord Mulgrave, though seated on the treasury bench, ventured to rise, and to support indirectly Bastard's *motion*. But, being gently reprehended by Pitt, for thus emancipating himself from his ministerial fetters, in compliance with professional feelings ; he remained silent throughout the course of the *two* succeeding debates. He had nearly served out his time, and he received his reward, the British peerage, little more than two years afterwards. Aware how unpopular was the ground, as well as the nobleman to be defended, ministers did not venture to meet the motion with a direct negative. They therefore moved *the previous question*, which was carried by a majority of *fifty-one* ; the respective numbers being 220 against 169.

Notwithstanding this numerical victory of administration, the triumph of public opinion remained with the opposite party. The two naval captains excluded by Lord Howe, received ample compensation for the loss of rank, if the parliamentary recognition of their merits could allay their wounded feelings. Nor did that nobleman

long survive in his official capacity the selection which he had made, whatever were the motives by which it was dictated. He languished near three months in employment, and then resigned. He was indeed *kicked up stairs*, being advanced from the dignity of a viscount, to the rank of an earl, with remainder of a barony to his three daughters, he having no son. This augmentation of honours, which he probably anticipated as certain whenever he should retire from the admiralty, though it might alleviate, could not compensate the loss of power, coupled with the circumstances by which it was occasioned, or at least accelerated. He returned no more to that post; but the naval action of the 1st of June 1794, when he defeated the fleet of republican France in the Bay of Biscay, shed a lustre over his declining years. That the king did not regret his resignation, no man doubted. Lord Howe's conduct during the American war, while commanding beyond the Atlantic, as well as in parliament, subsequent to his return, was known to have made a deep impression on his majesty's mind. Nor could he efface that sentiment by the charms of his address, or of his conversation. Taciturn, phlegmatic, and destitute of all gaiety, his German descent from George the First might be traced not only on his features, but in his whole deportment.

Those persons, indeed, who remarked the hos-

tile part taken by Sir George Howard, during the *second* debate relative to the promotions at the admiralty; and who knew the almost unlimited deference of the commander-in-chief for his sovereign's supposed wishes; inferred that so good a courtier did not steer such a course, without secretly knowing that it would be approved at St. James's. Pitt unquestionably fulfilled every ministerial obligation imposed on him, towards one of his colleagues in office, throughout the discussions that took place, however he might lament the cause that rendered necessary his exertions. So might Lord Hood, whose services, eminent as they confessedly were, yet would not perhaps have raised him to the dignity of the British peerage, if Fox, instead of Pitt, had presided in the councils of the crown from 1784 to 1801. Assuredly, his brother, Alexander; who had rendered himself so obnoxious by his evidence on Keppel's court-martial, after the action of the 27th of July 1778; would not have been created a viscount, unless Pitt had been minister. The two *Hoods* were sons of the clergyman of the village of South Petherton in Somersetshire, where was situate the estate of Burton Pynsent, bequeathed by Sir William Pynsent to the first Mr. Pitt, as a tribute of grateful admiration for his public services. They rose under his auspices, and devolved on his son. Pitt could not well regret Lord Howe's departure from office. He had, indeed,

every reason to rejoice at it; as he supplied the vacant place by introducing his own brother, the Earl of Chatham, into that high employment. Lord Hood, named at the same time a member of the board of admiralty, was given him as a *Mentor*.

*5th May.*—The severe conflicts which Pitt had with so much difficulty surmounted, during the passage of the “East India Declaratory Bill,” and throughout the discussions respecting Lord Howe, were speedily obliterated by a day of triumph. Early in May he laid before parliament a state of the finances; or in technical language, *he opened the budget*. Never did any minister make a more gratifying exposition, conveyed in language equally clear, concise, and yet ample in point of information! Without parade or ostentation, he observed that a very considerable augmentation had occurred in the expences of the *actual* year, beyond the estimate made in 1786; which encrease had been judged indispensable to our national honour, as well as prosperity. Having then detailed the different items or heads of this extraordinary expenditure; having shewn that they amounted in the aggregate to near one million three hundred thousand pounds; of which sum, one hundred and eighty thousand had been voted towards payment of the Prince of Wales’s debts; “Notwithstanding these heavy demands,” added Pitt, “there now remains a clear surplus of seventeen thousand pounds; without new taxes, with-

out loan, and without interrupting for an instant the application of *the million* set apart for the discharge of the national debt. Seven millions have been expended within the last four years, on the improvement of the navy. Thirty ships of the line, and thirty-five frigates, have been constructed or repaired, more than during the first four years which followed the peace of 1763. Meanwhile, in addition to all these propitious events, we have extinguished two millions and a half of our national debt."

Gratifying as was the minister's disclosure of the state of the finances, the contrast which they formed with those of France prodigiously augmented its effect. "I have," said he, "seen within these few hours past, the acknowledged condition of the French revenue, as exhibited by their own government. According to that account, the avowed annual deficiency, after all the retrenchments which they have effected, does not fall short of two millions three hundred thousand pounds sterling. Our rival therefore, who engaged in a war for the emancipation of our late colonies; which object she accomplished, and from which she projected to draw immense advantages; has failed in her ambitious calculations." So exhilarating a picture of our national resources reflected too much lustre on the administration to pass without comment. Sheridan rising as soon as the chancellor of the exchequer finished, observed,

that "invidious as the task might be, it nevertheless became necessary to dissipate the delusion under which the country laboured, and to detect the fallacies by which it was still attempted to perpetuate that deception." He then proceeded, with great financial ability, to dissect every proposition contained in the speech just pronounced; exhibiting proof of the solidity and depth of those faculties, the brilliancy of which he had so frequently displayed in that assembly.

Passing in review consecutively, Pitt's assertions and calculations, he endeavoured to demonstrate their falsity, or at least their uncertainty and exaggeration. If he did not persuade his audience of the truth of all his own assertions, he unquestionably impressed on their minds a strong conviction of his extraordinary endowments: for, contrary to his accustomed habits, wit formed no part of his appeal. The whole was fact and arithmetical demonstration. Such was the versatility of his parts, adapted to parliament as well as to the theatre; formed equally to delight at Drury-lane, in the house of commons, or in Westminster Hall! Sheridan wanted only two qualifications in order to have outshone all his contemporaries. I mean, application and moral character. He possessed, even more than Burke, a superabundance of genius. But the defects of his conduct finally plunged him in embarrassments of every kind, enfeebled his intellect, produced



premature old age, accompanied with diseases, and terminating in death. Raised to the rank of a privy counsellor before his decease, endowed with transcendent talents, after sitting almost his whole life in parliament, caressed by princes, by women, by all mankind ; his concluding days were passed in taverns, and in spunging-houses, surrounded by bailiffs, a stranger to domestic tranquillity or enjoyments. Neither Bacon, nor the second Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, nor Pope's Duke of Wharton, hold out more striking proofs of the inefficiency of genius to excite respect, or even to procure comfort, if not accompanied with prudence and with morals, than was exhibited in the person of Sheridan.

Fox continued the attack thus begun on *the budget*. "I make no scruple," observed he, "to assert, whatever odium may accompany the declaration, that our revenues and resources have been represented in language as much too sanguine, as our annual expenditure has been estimated on too low a scale. This exaggeration produced the very delusion by which France has been reduced to her actual state of embarrassment. But, such is the happy constitution of Great Britain, that we cannot long be held in error. We may be deceived in pence; in millions, deception cannot operate." On the following day, Sir Grey Cooper, followed by Hussey, member for Salisbury, (both men deeply conver-

sant in matters of finance,) undertook to point out the fallacy of Pitt's propositions. The former, than whom few individuals within those walls better understood the subject, at considerable length discussed *the budget*, and declared it to be an illusion. Hussey put various questions to the minister, designed to probe the obscure or vulnerable parts of his exposure. Pitt, thus assailed, justified his calculations. Yet, with a manly mind he admitted, that though he saw no reason for expecting it, nevertheless the revenue might deceive his expectation in the coming year. "Should the fact so prove," added he, "this house must meet the difficulty in a becoming manner, and raise the deficiency by a loan, or by new taxes." Pulteney, more favourably disposed towards administration, complimented the chancellor of the exchequer on his financial plans, bestowing on them the most flattering epithets. All the *resolutions* proposed by Pitt for the adoption of the house were finally passed without any division.

The proceedings in the prosecution of Impey, which had been retarded by the examinations of witnesses, at length appeared to approach their termination. Towards the last days of April, Sir Gilbert Elliot began to open the charge relative to the trial and execution of Nundcomar. His monotonous and measured enunciation, unilluminated by a ray of vivacity, or a spark of wit, derived nevertheless an interest from the sound

sense which pervaded his whole discourse, from the serious nature of the accusation preferred, and, above all, from his accurate information on the subject. He admitted that Sir Elijah's defence had produced on his audience, as well as on the public, a very favourable impression. But he took occasion, at the same time, to comment with great severity on the *sort* of defence to which the person accused had thought proper to resort. In fact, Sir Elijah, with the guarded caution of a man bred to the law, made only a *verbal* defence, declining to commit it to paper. The chancellor, (Lord Thurlow,) when alluding to the circumstance, during a debate in the house of peers, had not hesitated to pronounce Impey a *wise* man for having adopted such a mode of reply. Nor did he scruple to declare Hastings a *weak* man, for having delivered in at the bar a *written* defence. Elliot adverting next to Sir Elijah's justification, that "he had done nothing more than the other judges who tried Nundcomar; and that if he was guilty, they participated in his culpability;" observed, "In every instance where more than one person is accused of committing a criminal act, it is customary to prosecute the ring-leader. The end of justice is thus sufficiently answered, the principle of human penalties being to make an example of great offenders, thereby deterring others from the perpetration of similar enormities."

Sir Gilbert next approached a part of his argument on which he felt it necessary to observe the utmost circumspection. I mean, the share taken by his own brother in Nundcomar's trial. This brother, Alexander Elliot, had been sent out, when very young, to Calcutta, in the civil service of the East India Company; where he not only gave promise, but exhibited proofs, of distinguished talents. They had justly endeared him to Hastings; and on the trial of the unfortunate rajah, Elliot acted in court as interpreter. He was subsequently sent home to England by the governor-general, on a secret mission, at which time he brought to London the copy of that legal proceeding. Returning to India, he continued to enjoy, and to deserve, Hastings's friendship. But his career was arrested, he having perished in the flower of youth, from the consequences of passing the Cuttack river, after a course of mercurial medicines, while he was on his way from Bengal to Madras. His premature end excited universal regret; and the governor-general, as a last tribute to his memory, ordered a monument to be erected on the spot where he expired. In his parody on Horace's "Ode to Pompeius Grosphus," Hastings has commemorated his friend, when alluding to the

"Abstulit clarum cita mors Achillen"

of the Roman poet, though I do not exactly recollect the English lines. Sir Gilbert attempted

to prove that his brother, of whom he spoke with the warmest feelings of fraternal affection, neither participated in, nor had ever manifested any approbation of, Sir Elijah Impey's conduct during Nundcomar's trial. But Sir Richard Sutton, who undertook Impey's defence, produced and read in his place a letter addressed by Alexander Elliot to the chief justice of Bengal. It was dated from the mouth of the Ganges, on board the ship which conveyed him to Europe; and contained the most unequivocal expressions in favour of the court, as well as of the judge, who tried and condemned Nundcomar. This evidence was not, however, brought forward on that night, being reserved by Sutton for the evening when a division finally took place on the question relative to Impey's guilt or innocence.

*7th May.* — Sir Gilbert Elliot, on the second debate, which followed after an interval of about ten days, endeavoured to prove that the whole judicial proceedings instituted against Nundcomar were in themselves subversive of, as well as contrary to, the established forms of criminal justice. He denied that the King of England possessed, or could delegate, any jurisdiction whatever over the natives of India. His reasonings on that most important point appeared to me to carry with them great weight, if they were not indeed unanswerable. Even though the right of trying

the accused rajah by the authority of British laws should be recognized, yet he maintained that Impey's whole conduct, while sitting on the bench, carried with it an internal evidence of his intention or determination to dispatch Nundcomar. Sir Elijah well knew that the rajah had not only come forward as the informer against Mr. Hastings, whom he accused of gross peculation; but was likewise engaged as a principal witness in a pending prosecution, for the express purpose of proving the allegation, at the very time that he was apprehended, indicted, and brought to trial. Impey's avowed political attachment to the governor-general,—a fact which was not contradicted,—rendered it too probable that he had made himself the voluntary instrument of Hastings's resentment. Lastly, Elliot positively denied that the crime of forgery had ever been regarded throughout Hindostan as a capital offence punishable with death. Nundcomar's counsel, he observed, at the very commencement of the trial, had made objections to the competency of the tribunal before which he was arraigned;—objections, which the chief justice answered with marks of unbecoming warmth and passion. Even in the examination of the witnesses, and throughout every part of Impey's conduct, he asserted that the indelible traces of partiality were obvious and incontestable; fixing on the chief justice a strong suspicion of

his having become the governor-general's instrument, for the purpose of offering up Nundcomar as a victim.

Having reached this stage of the charge, Sir Gilbert threw himself on the liberality of the house, to permit of his postponing for a few hours the remaining circumstances of the case. Two points in particular, both which took place subsequent to the trial, merited, he said, their peculiar attention: namely, Sir Elijah's having overruled an arrest of judgment, which had been moved; and his refusal to grant a respite. Sir Richard Sutton opposing the proposition of any further delay, as equally injurious to the *feelings* of the individual accused, and disgraceful to their own proceedings, Burke started up in great agitation. After pronouncing a fine encomium on his friend's speech, he demanded whether some attention was not due to a member who requested a short pause from the exertion and fatigue that he had undergone?—"We have been called upon," continued he, "to consider the *feelings* of the person accused. But the person himself does not manifest in his deportment that he is much actuated by *feelings* becoming his present situation. I have recently seen him in Westminster Hall, where he appeared rather like an accuser, than a party accused. Contumacious, arrogant, confident, and assuming,—” Here loud and general cries of Order! interrupted his further progress. Burke still

attempted, nevertheless, to justify, and even to repeat his animadversions on Impey's behaviour, as altogether unbecoming a man charged with such weighty crimes. Finding, however, that the house would not permit him to throw out reflections of that nature against an absent individual, he assumed a milder tone. With pathetic remonstrances he endeavoured to shew, that even Impey's friends would neither consult his honour, nor his advantage, by pressing for a hasty decision. He was himself, he said, from exhausture, utterly unfit to take part in a debate of such magnitude. Pitt now interposed. Having passed a comment rather severe on the length of Sir Gilbert's two speeches, and having expressed his reluctance to postpone the business to another day; he yet admitted that if the mover of the charge found himself unable to proceed, the assembly must of necessity adjourn. It was universally agreed at the same time, that a final decision should take place on the evening fixed for the next agitation of the question.

*9th May.*—Not having been present on that occasion, I cannot relate, as an ear-witness, any of the circumstances which then occurred. Some friends of Impey had strongly importuned me to attend in my place whenever the last discussion should arise. But, as I thought very differently from them on the subject of his judicial conduct in Bengal, I left London, in order to avoid giv-



ing any vote. In the composition of these memoirs, I lay claim only to one merit, *truth*, which necessarily includes *impartiality*. Whatever errors may become embodied in the work, I have not anywhere intentionally disguised or given a false colouring to facts. I highly disapproved and condemned every part of Impey's conduct, from the commencement to the catastrophe of Nundcomar's trial. That it was "a legal murder," I will not by any means assert: but the proceedings were more worthy of Jefferies, or of Scroggs, than of Hale, or of Forster. A determination, not only to condemn, but to execute the sentence, seems to have animated the chief justice. Otherwise, why did he not respite the prisoner? Yet, as three other judges participated with him throughout the whole proceeding, I doubt whether Impey could legally be an object of *exclusive* impeachment.

When I thus pass *moral* sentence on Sir Elijah, I most reluctantly extend it to Mr. Hastings, under whose concealed directions, or understood wishes, it is impossible not to suppose that he acted. Here again I sacrifice to *truth*: for these memoirs sufficiently attest how highly I estimate the governor-general's public services. They were, in my opinion, eminent: but Nundcomar's execution cast a shade over his administration. I do not indeed hesitate to declare, that under all the circumstances of the two cases, the execution

of Mary, Queen of Scots, which has been considered as so great a blemish in the reign and character of Elizabeth, excites far less condemnation, and is susceptible of a much more solid defence, than are the proceedings that accompanied the trial, and precipitated the end, of the Hindoo rajah. If I had been *compelled* to vote on the question, however I might have regretted such a necessity, yet, beyond a doubt, I should have been found on that night among the minority. I am of opinion that two-thirds of the members who were absent, would, on a similar supposition, have acted in the same manner.

Though I did not assist in my place on the 9th of May, nevertheless the interesting nature of the subject, and my personal acquaintance with every individual who took part in the discussion, lead me to detail its principal features. It was universally admitted that Elliot summed up with great ability. He endeavoured to prove, from a number of concurring facts, the systematic criminality of Impey in not respiting the prisoner, even though he might have been capitally convicted by iniquitously applying to the case our statutes of English law. "I would vainly seek," continued Elliot, "such an accumulation of guilt in the legal annals of our own country. It is only from the sanguinary records of Spanish America that I can extract a precedent. When Pizarro was determined to put to death the Peru-

vian Inca Atabalipa, he constituted a court with all the formalities of law, before which tribunal he arraigned the devoted prince. Pizarro then accused him of having usurped his own kingdom, and of levying war on the Spaniards, his rightful sovereigns. On these atrocious charges was the Inca condemned and executed." — "What is there," observed Elliot, "in Sir Elijah Impey's character that should prevent his impeachment? Neither the dignity, the profound learning, nor the comprehensive genius of Lord Bacon, the founder of modern science, could shelter him from the punishment merited by his corruption as a judge." Towards the conclusion of his speech, after appealing to the reason of his audience, he addressed himself to their emotions. Having related the affecting particulars of Nund-comar's end, from the testimony of an eye-witness, "The ghost of that murdered rajah," exclaimed Sir Gilbert, "demands justice! It is on all our heads! The cry of blood rings in our ears, and bursts our walls for vengeance! To your justice therefore I commit the culprit. Deal with him as he deserves." There is something in these appalling expressions which involuntarily reminds us of Clarence's dream; of the "shadow like an angel, with bright hair dabbled in blood," who shrieks aloud,

"Seize on him, Furies, take him to your torments!"

Sir Richard Sutton, to whom the defence of

Impey was principally entrusted, rising immediately, addressed the house. He was a man of coarse and almost rugged exterior; but whose powers of mind, matured by experience, and fortified by perfect information of the case under discussion, enabled him to place in the most favourable point of view every fact which could conduce to the extrication of the chief justice. After professing his inability to follow Sir Gilbert through a speech, or rather, through three speeches, comprizing in the aggregate *fifteen hours*; Sutton, in language of perspicuity and energy, brought forward a number of documents calculated to erase the impression of Impey's guilt. He was followed by Macdonald and Arden, the solicitor and attorney-general, both of whom justified Sir Elijah's conduct on the bench throughout the trial; but both acknowledged that if they had sate as judges on the occasion, they should have respited the prisoner. Such an admission was in itself a *moral* condemnation. All the entrenchments thrown up by legal ingenuity, in order to protect the chief justice, were however stormed with resistless eloquence by Fox, who accused him of having committed a *deliberate murder*. The application to Nundcomar's case, of English acts of parliament, passed under Elizabeth, or early in George the Second's reign, long before we acquired any territorial possessions in India, Fox treated with mingled ridicule and

indignation. "Would any man except Sir Elijah Impey," demanded he, "on the doubtful operation of such statutes, have taken upon himself the responsibility of putting an individual to death? Must he not have said to himself, before he passed sentence on the unhappy prisoner, 'If I had been in England, I could not have perpetrated this act of blood. *There*, the king's prerogative of mercy would have been sacred; but *here*, this wretch is in my power, and I will murder him.'"

Pursuing Impey with the same force of severe reason, Fox endeavoured to render palpable his complicity with the governor-general, for the purpose of offering up Nundcomar. "It is, to my conviction," observed Fox, "absurd to maintain, that no malice existed in the chief justice's mind throughout the trial. His subservience to Mr. Hastings is to be presumed from all the circumstances of the case. Being so presumed, a corrupt motive forms a necessary inference: for no two individuals would agree in so wicked an act as that of taking away a fellow-creature's life, without a corrupt motive of some kind." Fox's conclusion was most impressive. "If," said he, "I was called on to pronounce as a man of *honour*, I should declare that Sir Elijah Impey has been guilty of a deliberate murder. I would say the same, if I were to depose as a jurymen, on my *oath*. I lament that our powers, as a branch of

the legislature, are so contracted, that we *can* only vote him guilty of a high crime and misdemeanor ; because, in my opinion, *imprisonment for life, and half his fortune, could form no adequate compensation for his guilt.*" He added, "It is well known that I am not a sanguinary man. But I should not regret if murder were, in the present instance, to incur the punishment deserved by murder."

The chancellor of the exchequer did not rise till a late hour. On *his* line of conduct, Impey's friends well knew, would probably turn the final event. Pitt spoke with force and decision ; declaring his firm belief that "in no view could any corrupt motive *be brought home* to Sir Elijah ; and that therefore he should give his negative to the question of impeachment ; as, unless a corrupt motive could be *proved*, no man *ought* to support Elliot's proposition." The accusation of a conspiracy between Impey and Hastings, for the purpose of destroying Nundcomar, he treated as destitute of any shadow of solid *proof*. Reviewing in succession all the objections urged against the competency of the tribunal before which the rajah was arraigned ; the consequent illegality of the proceedings, and the refusal of the chief justice to grant a respite ; Pitt endeavoured to demonstrate their futility. So indignant was Fox at finding the minister thus extend his shield over Impey, that he did not scruple to say in reply,

“ I consider the man who can bring himself seriously to defend such a conduct, *as an accomplice in the guilt of the murder.*” But Pitt calmly answered, that “ if the innocence of Nundcomar had ever been shewn, he would then have admitted there existed some foundation for *the declamatory invective* just pronounced.” I have nevertheless always considered Pitt’s speech on this occasion as having done more honour to his abilities, than to his principles. That the corrupt motive by which the chief justice had been actuated, was not *juridically proved*, must indeed be conceded: but all the circumstances of the transaction impress with a strong conviction of his guilt. Nor will impartial posterity probably approve the conduct of a minister who could join in the impeachment of Hastings for *political* crimes, while he became the advocate and the protector of a judge who, when sitting on a case of life and death, acted like Impey.

Two individuals distinguished themselves on that evening; one, by the eloquent but vehement nature of his speech; the other, by its Spartan force and brevity. The former, Colonel Fullarton, whom I have already had occasion to mention, inveighed in animated terms against Impey, as a criminal of the most atrocious description; whose ermine was steeped in human blood, who trampled on all laws to gratify his insatiate love of money, who amassed an immense fortune by

bribes and contracts, and who had converted the court of judicature itself into an "*officina scelerum et malorum*." Nor did he fail to verify many of these allegations, by more than declamation. Some of the facts which he enumerated, however irrelevant they might be to the immediate subject under discussion, yet deeply impressed his audience. On the cruelty and injustice of subjecting a Hindoo to the operation of English laws, which never could be construed to extend over that country, Fullarton observed, "If it were legal to hang Nundcomar on the statute passed in 1728 against forgery; it would be equally consonant to justice, to hang the Nabob of Bengal, or the Great Mogul, and all his court, on the statute of James the First against bigamy." Sir James Johnstone, who always brought Robert Bruce before my eyes; but who concealed under a rough form, and unpolished manners, great integrity, directed by strong sense; exclaimed, after listening more than two hours to Fullarton's severe philippic, "Every argument confirms my opinion that the question ought to be supported. We have beheaded a king: we have hanged a peer: we have shot an admiral: we are now trying a governor-general; and I can see no reason why we should not put on his trial, a judge and a chief justice."

Burke concluded this long and most interesting discussion. Having laboured, not without effect, to prove, from a variety of concurring testimonies,



the confederacy that existed between Mr. Hastings and Sir Elijah Impey, for Nundcomar's destruction; "Those persons," continued he, "who sanction by their vote such an act of enormity, will practically say to future judges, 'Copy the conduct of the chief justice of Bengal. Desert your duty and your impartiality. Become political instruments in the hands of government. Oppose power to right, and instead of protecting innocence, embrace the cause of guilt!'" His animadversions on Pitt were most severe. "It was asserted of old," said Burke, "that if the gods addressed themselves to men, they would use the language of the Greeks. With equal truth may I declare, that if despotism itself were to speak, it would use the language, and enforce the arguments, of the chancellor of the exchequer." After a debate of more than twelve hours, a division at length took place. I believe that the attendance never exceeded two hundred members, at any period of the night. Only one hundred and twenty-eight voted on the question, who did not constitute a fourth part of the aggregate numbers of the house of commons, as then formed. Fifty-five were for the impeachment; seventy-three negatived it: thus leaving a majority in favour of Sir Elijah, amounting to eighteen. It might be deemed an escape; but it could not be denominated a triumph. Dundas did not vote on the question; — a circumstance which gave rise to

much speculation, as he very rarely took a different line in parliament from the minister. That the real independent majority of the members present were of opinion to impeach Impey, no man can doubt, who considers how many individuals implicitly *followed Pitt*. I will estimate them at *eleven*, but I might take them at a higher number, and I shall enumerate them.

The Hon. John Charles Villiers, whom he made chief justice in eyre north of Trent not more than a year and a half afterwards, may be placed at their head. This office, a sinecure, and for life, he owed entirely to the minister's friendship; and he continues to hold it at the present hour. Lord Camelford (probably at Pitt's request) brought Mr. Villiers into parliament, for Old Sarum. Early in 1787 he had been made comptroller of the king's household, by the same powerful influence. He possessed no parliamentary ability; but his figure was tall and elegant; his features noble, and set off by a profusion of light hair. The "*Rolliad*" notices him as

"Villiers, comely with the flaxen hair;"

subjoining, "The character of *Villiers* seems to be drawn after the *Nireus* of Homer; who, as the commentators remark, is celebrated in the catalogue of warriors, for the handsomest man in the Grecian army, and is never mentioned again through the whole twenty-four books of the *Iliad*."—Edward James Eliot, and his younger

brother, John Eliot, now Earl of St. Germain's, who then jointly represented the Cornish borough of Liskeard, might be regarded as almost inseparable from the chancellor of the exchequer. He had raised their father to the British peerage, immediately after his own accession to power, in January 1784; and the eldest of the two brothers stood in the closest ties of connexion with him by marriage.

Mr. William Grenville, from consanguinity, as well as from principle, naturally kept his eye fixed on Pitt. So did the Marquis of Graham, on whom he lavishly conferred offices and honours, down to the period of his own decease. Lord Hood, and his brother Sir Alexander, I have already counted, not long since, among the devoted adherents of the minister. Rose and Steele, the two secretaries of the treasury, followed of course the head of the board. No individual in the house was probably more strongly attached to Pitt than the Earl of Mornington, whom he had made a lord of the treasury in 1786. He represented Windsor at this time. Lastly, Addington, now Lord Sidmouth, owed his whole advancement in life to the protection of the chancellor of the exchequer, who, not long afterwards, placed him in the Speaker's chair. I do not include in this list either Mr. Bankes, or Lord Apsley, now Earl Bathurst, though both voted against Impey's impeachment; because the for-

mer, notwithstanding his friendship for Pitt, always displayed a most independent mind, neither to be warped by interest, ambition, or attachment. Lord Apsley, who was placed at the board of admiralty by Pitt, in December 1783, of which he still remained a member, I might be fully justified in ranging among the ministerial followers. Hardinge, who during the debates that preceded Hastings's prosecution, in April and May 1786, exclaimed so vehemently against allowing the governor-general's public services to form a *set-off* against his demerits;—Hardinge, who then displayed so tender a political conscience, yet voted for acquitting Impey. Kenyon likewise gave his vote to Sir Elijah; but he did not speak on the question. It is evident that Impey owed his security to his profession. If he had not been a lawyer, he would probably have been impeached. We must recollect that Pitt was bred to the bar; Fox felt no predilection for the long robe.

Several of the minister's most intimate friends absented themselves nevertheless on that night. Lord Bayham, now Marquis Camden, whose father had been raised to the dignity of an earl, only two years earlier, by Pitt, — and who was himself a lord of the admiralty, — did not attend the debate. Another member of the same board, a nobleman with whom I have lived in some degree of intimacy; a man most conscientious and correct in all the actions of his life; — I mean,

Lord Arden;—declined voting on the point. So did Lord Mulgrave, notwithstanding the lucrative office of which he was in possession, and the peerage to which he looked forward with anxious expectation. John James Hamilton, who so soon afterwards became by Pitt's special favour Marquis of Abercorn, strenuously as he supported the governor-general, yet did not form one of Impey's small majority. Even Mr. Robert Smith, on whom his friend the chancellor of the exchequer induced his majesty, nine years later, to confer a British peerage, absented himself on that evening. To the members who followed the head of the administration, we must add *four* who were devotedly attached to Hastings. Major Scott was his agent; Mr. Sumner and Mr. Sullivan, his two sureties at the bar of the house of lords. Finally, Barwell, who, while a member of the supreme council, had invariably taken part with the governor-general in all his disputes with Clavering, Monson, and Francis. Barwell had besides, during his residence at Calcutta, formed an intimate connexion with Impey. A prosecution having been instituted by the East India Company against the former for specific acts of peculation, which suit was tried before the latter, Barwell was cast in the action. Yet, while sitting on the bench, the chief justice, though engaged in the exercise of his solemn judicial functions, did not hesitate to declare that he had accepted the office

of trustee for Mr. Barwell, and of guardian to his children. This fact, which Colonel Fullarton asserted in the course of his speech, and which remained uncontradicted, sufficiently accounted for the vote given by Barwell. If, after deducting the personal friends of Pitt and of Hastings, we calculate Impey's majority, we shall find it reduced almost to a nullity. His person and fortune were, however, secured by it. His official character, in my opinion, suffered shipwreck.

12th—18th May.—Since the commencement of Hastings's impeachment, no account had hitherto been delivered to parliament, specifying the mode in which the sums of money were expended which had been advanced by the exchequer to the managers of the prosecution, although these issues already amounted to several thousand pounds. A motion being unexpectedly made from the ministerial side of the house, demanding that "the account should be laid on the table," Pitt expressed not only his assent to the proposition itself; but added, that the lords of the treasury had addressed a letter on the subject to the managers, making the necessary enquiries. "As, however," continued he, "the answer received gives little hope of deriving from them the information required, I am happy that means have been adopted for compelling its production." Fox, with great temper, replied, that the managers were undoubtedly responsible to parliament for the propriety of

the *services* ordered ; though not for the *disbursement* of the money, which lay with the solicitors employed on the prosecution ; over whom it was the duty of the lords of the treasury to exercise due vigilance. But Burke, who, as chairman, had written the answer alluded to by Pitt, after observing that he should make no objection to the *motion*, subjoined, that “ the suggestion made by the chancellor of the exchequer, as applying to the letter which he had written by order of the committee of managers, *was not true.*” Pitt, thus contradicted on a point of fact, rose a second time ; and after remarking the decency and propriety of Fox’s reply, “ The other gentleman,” said he, “ perhaps from being accustomed to use an extraordinary license of speech *elsewhere*, forgets the place in which he now is, and seems desirous of introducing the practice within *these* walls. No impropriety committed by *him*, and which disgraces himself, shall however prevent *me* from doing my duty, as well as saying whatever may be dictated by a sense of that duty.” He then formally repeated his preceding assertion. Irritated by this reprimand, Burke inveighed with much asperity against the minister. Finding nevertheless the sense of the house decidedly adverse to him, he on the same night presented the accounts. They contained no particulars of the expenditure ; briefly stating that a sum exceeding 8,000*l.* had been already issued by the trea-

sure. About 3,800*l.* of it was laid out in erecting, or in furnishing, the court; while more than 4,000*l.* passed into the hands of the gentlemen of the long robe, retained for aiding the impeachment.

Another occurrence of a most interesting nature took place on the same evening. Wilberforce (a name which will always be pronounced with veneration) was at that time one of the representatives for the county of York. Impelled by the active benevolence of his character, he had, after mature reflection, digested a plan for the regulation, if not for the suppression, of the negro trade. As early as the commencement of the session, he had even given notice of his intention to bring the subject before the house; which he would personally have carried into effect, if he had not been prevented by illness. Pitt, with whom he had contracted an early friendship, which years had cemented, undertook therefore to supply his place. Having briefly stated that the African trade had long engaged the public attention, Pitt observed that two opinions respecting it seemed to divide the nation; all agreeing in the necessity of taking some steps, but not coinciding as to their precise extent: the complete abolition being demanded by a vast majority, while others conceived that it might still be permitted to exist under certain limitations. But, on account of the advanced period



of the session, he thought it judicious to defer all further proceedings till the ensuing year; when, if his friend should not be sufficiently recovered to undertake the task, he pledged himself to submit a proposition for their consideration. He concluded by a *motion* to that effect. Throughout his whole speech, Pitt took care, however, not even to glance at his own opinions upon the question, reserving all explanation respecting it for future deliberations.

Fox instantly stood up, and in language of force, yet not intemperate, declared his surprize, as well as his sorrow, at finding that it was intended to postpone to another session the consideration of so important a subject. Pitt nevertheless persisting to declare that he would make no disclosure of his individual intentions, until the whole matter should be agitated on a future day, Burke reiterated Fox's arguments in more vehement terms. Martin, — who, like Aristides, never enquired whether a measure was merely useful, but whether it was just and humane, — briefly expressed his hopes that “no political benefit, no commercial expediency or advantage, would ever be allowed to preponderate, in opposition to the eternal dictates of moral rectitude.” Sir William Dolben, one of the representatives for the University of Oxford, declared his instructions from that respectable body to be most adverse to a continuation of the commerce in slaves.

With much emotion, he pointed out the misery endured by the human victims crowded into vessels, on board which they were transported to the West India colonies, as calling loudly for *immediate* interposition. "Between the present session," added he, "and the commencement of the next, ten thousand lives may be sacrificed to our criminal delay." Mr. Pelham, then member for the county of Sussex, rising in his turn, avowed not only his detestation of the traffic in question, but his intention, if supported by the house, to bring forward, before the approaching prorogation, a measure for its general regulation. In answer to so many appeals, Pitt replied, that though he should most thankfully receive every species of information which might be offered him, yet, as he could not consider the question itself to be ripe for discussion, he should persist in his original *motion*.

Two, and only two, individuals, ventured to speak in extenuation, if not in justification, of the African trade. They jointly represented the town of Liverpool, and loudly called for an immediate investigation, as the sole mode of exposing the calumnies circulated respecting the merchants, as well as the planters, engaged in that unpopular branch of commerce. The first, Lord Penrhyn, had been raised to the dignity of the Irish peerage by Fox, in the autumn of the year 1788; when the king, though he positively refused to augment the *British* house of

lords, consented to add eight or nine to the peers of the sister kingdom. I may here remark, that in thus acting, his majesty, or his secret advisers, displayed much foresight; for on the first division to which the memorable "East India Bill" gave rise in the *upper* house, shortly afterwards, the adjournment was carried against administration by a majority of only *eight* votes. If, therefore, Fox could have induced George the Third to give him a similar mark of royal favour, or weakness, with the proof of both exhibited by Anne in 1711,—when, on the Lord Treasurer Harley's suggestion, she created *twelve* peers at one time,—the *coalition* might have rendered ineffectual all his efforts at emancipation. Indeed, the king appears to have foreseen that his only chance of escape from bondage lay, not in the lower house, where Fox's presence, eloquence, and influence overbore all opposition, but among the peers.

To return to Lord Penrhyn. He was a man of moderate talents, childless, but possessing very extensive patrimonial estates in North Wales, besides considerable property in the West Indies. His colleague, Bamber Gascoyne, (son of the lord of the admiralty of the same name, whom I have had occasion to mention more than once, towards the close of Lord North's administration,) treated the abolition of the slave-trade as a visionary and impracticable project; but admitted that some

regulations might be beneficially adopted. Lord Penrhyn flatly contradicted Sir William Dolben's assertions respecting the severities inflicted, and the mortality produced, among the Africans, on their passage across the Atlantic Ocean: observing, that "the argument proved too much, as the whole profit made by the commanders of the vessels employed in that branch of commerce arose from the number of negroes whom they could bring to the market in good health." Pitt's *resolution*, for "postponing the further consideration of the subject till the ensuing session," was finally carried without any division.

20th May.—I have already related, that in consequence of the *motion* made for that purpose, Burke had laid on the table of the house, though not without marks of indignant reluctance, a statement of the expences already incurred by the prosecution of Hastings. But it was couched in terms so general and laconic, as to give no satisfactory information. A second *motion* therefore followed from the same quarter, for an account, "specifying to whom, and for what purpose, the respective sums had been issued." Sheridan, after observing that the obvious intention of the mover was to disgust the public with the trial, as a source of enormous expence, diverged, with his usual felicity, into the path of humour. "Unquestionably," continued he, "the house may, if they think fit, resolve that no counsel shall be henceforward

allowed the managers. In such case, it will be necessary to move that the attorney and solicitor-general, with the master of the rolls, be added to our present committee. Or, the house may come to a *resolution*, compelling the managers themselves to defray the expences of counsel. If so, I hope they will have the goodness to join to the committee Sir Sampson Gideon, and some others of the wealthiest individuals composing this assembly." Sir Sampson, who then represented the city of Coventry, if he was one of the richest, was likewise one of the most benevolent men who has appeared in our time. His hand was never shut to distress, or closed against human sufferings. He might have furnished the prototype of Cumberland's "Jew." Pitt, not long afterwards, raised him to an Irish peerage. Sheridan concluded by expressing a hope, that when the account should be produced, the mover would follow up his present *motion* with another; recommending that "the counsel employed should in future be better paid." The managers nevertheless being obliged to withdraw, previous to a division personally affecting themselves, the question was carried by sixty against nineteen votes.

21st May.—Among the most magnificent public structures which have been raised under the reign of George the Third, in London or Westminster, may justly be reckoned Somerset House. I am, indeed, old enough perfectly to remember the antient

palace of that name, constructed about the middle of the sixteenth century, by the imprudent and unfortunate Lord Protector, uncle of Edward the Sixth. It was a beautiful and princely edifice, neither strictly Gothic nor Grecian in its architecture; the successive residence of two queens dowager, during the period between *the Restoration* and *the Revolution*; namely, Henrietta Maria of France, and Catherine of Portugal: lastly, the pretended scene of Sir Edmondbury Godfrey's murder in 1678; one of the most obscure and problematical events recorded in our history. Passionately attached as I am to the monuments of departed times, I beheld its demolition, which took place about the year 1776, with sentiments of no ordinary regret. The construction of the new edifice was entrusted to Sir William Chambers; an architect who, though he may not rival the fame of Inigo Jones, or of Sir Christopher Wren, yet would have passed down to posterity with distinction, if in an evil hour he had not published his "Dissertation on Oriental Gardening." This performance exposed him not only to ridicule, but to *poetic* ridicule, illuminated by genius, and pointed with inconceivable elegance of satire. I allude to "The Heroic Epistle," which appeared about the spring of the year 1773. The author (universally considered to be Mason) thus apostrophizes Sir William, at the commencement of the poem:

“ Knight of the Polar Star! by fortune plac'd,  
To shine the cynosure of British taste;  
Whose orb collects in one refulgent view,  
The scatter'd glories of Chinese virtù !”

Chambers found, however, in the royal patronage ample compensation for these “ paper bullets of the brain.” He was made surveyor-general to the board of works, as well as architect to the king; some branches of whose education he had superintended, under the reign of George the Second. He likewise derived no inconsiderable pecuniary advantage from the *per centage* allowed him on the large sums expended in the erection of Somerset House.

Eleven years had already elapsed since its commencement, during which time above three hundred thousand pounds had been issued to him from the treasury. His own estimates originally fell very short of that sum, and yet it was calculated that one hundred thousand pounds more would still be wanted for its completion. So vast an expenditure of the public money excited animadversion, and the subject was repeatedly mentioned with much condemnation in the house of commons. I well recollect, during the course of the session under our review, the loud complaints made respecting it by Hussey, one of the representatives for the city of Salisbury. He was a man of coarse, simple, and homely manners, but of recognized integrity; versed in arithmetical cal-

culations, however deficient in classic attainments: never speaking except on pecuniary topics, and exceedingly tenacious of the national purse. Somerset House, whenever mentioned, always excited his indignation; and on one occasion he exclaimed, "Would to heaven that building were burnt to the ground!" Observing Dundas opposite to him, seated on the treasury bench; and who, as treasurer of the navy, was preparing to occupy the apartments officially assigned to him in the quadrangle; Hussey added, smiling, "I do not however wish it at present, as the right honourable gentleman would be enveloped in the conflagration." The individual who at this time brought the subject under parliamentary consideration was Sir John Miller, an Irish baronet. His wife, who, in the early part of the present reign, published her "*Travels through Italy*," attained after her return from the Continent a degree of celebrity by establishing a sort of *blue stocking* society, or *della Crusca Academy*. The scene lay at her seat of *Bath Easton Villa*, near the city of Bath. Here she gave morning entertainments, to which the company of both sexes repaired for the purpose of depositing their poetical compositions within an urn, placed in the pleasure-grounds. The productions were afterwards read aloud, and honorary prizes adjudged or distributed by the lady of the mansion to the successful candidate. Sir John, after his



wife's decease, brought himself into the house for a Cornish borough, though by no means endowed with parliamentary talents or eloquence.

Having detailed all the leading facts of the case, and demonstrated the enormous profits which Sir William Chambers had already made, as well as those that must prospectively accrue from his architectural contracts, Miller moved for "a committee of enquiry into the expenditure of the sums voted for constructing Somerset House." The motion was seconded by Mr. Drake, who, jointly with his father, represented the borough of Agmondesham, in the county of Bucks; which town and its inhabitants might be considered as a part of their large patrimonial estates. I believe Mr. Drake, sen. sat in eight or nine parliaments uninterruptedly, always for that place. His son manifested great eccentricity of character and deportment; but his uprightness of intention, sustained by a very independent mind, qualified these singularities of manner. Pitt, who no doubt knew the royal wishes on the point, rising immediately, entered into a laboured defence of Chambers. He admitted, indeed, that the account of the sums expended by the architect ought to be without delay submitted to parliament; leaving, nevertheless, the appointment of a committee of enquiry for ulterior consideration. Pulteney fearlessly expressed his astonishment and concern at the resistance to Miller's *motion* made by the

chancellor of the exchequer. Such was likewise apparently the sense of the house ; but the question not being connected with party, none of the opposition members attended in their places. Miller had in fact addressed his discourse to empty benches. Pitt, though he professed the utmost deference for Pulteney's opinion, yet adhered to his own determination. Under these circumstances, the mover himself expressed his readiness to withdraw the *motion* : when Mr. Drake starting up, protested that he never would consent to such a proposition. " I am," exclaimed he with much emotion, "*adamantine* on the subject." A division therefore took place, when ministers were supported by seventy-six votes. Only twenty-one sustained Sir John Miller. Yet the triumph of administration was merely a victory of numbers, and by no means a proof of opinion.

24th May.—The session began now to draw towards its close, and a prorogation would probably have taken place before the middle of June, if Sir William Dolben, certain as he was of support from every side of the house, had not brought forward a measure for alleviating the condition and sufferings of the African slaves, while on their passage to the West India colonies. Sir William joined to the mildest manners a cultivated mind, and a most benevolent nature. The bill itself, intended solely for *regulation*, kept

wholly clear of *abolition*. Pitt, while he reserved his opinion on the *general* question, yet admitted that, as during the intervening months between the present and the ensuing session, the hardships endured by the slaves during the voyage might be aggravated, a sufficient parliamentary ground had been stated for enacting a *temporary* law. On that principle only, which might be esteemed more a moral and humane impulse or conviction than the basis of a political measure, he said it should receive his support. Scarcely any opposition was exhibited on the occasion; but, a few days afterwards, Lord Penrhyn peremptorily denied the cruel practices asserted to prevail on board the slave-ships; all which stories he declared to be founded in calumny, ignorance, and defamation.

*28th May.*—Impediments to the bill arose, however, from a variety of other quarters. Not only Liverpool, but London, petitioned to be heard against it by counsel. Sir William Dolben, in a manner equally temperate and convincing, stated its object; limited exclusively to ameliorating the treatment, and regulating the number, of the unhappy captives, during their voyage across the Atlantic. The cruelties perpetrated, he offered to prove by witnesses without number, of every description. Lord Penrhyn, nevertheless, still denying all the facts advanced; appealing to the prudence and the policy of the house, against their compassion; at the same time reclaiming

loudly the faith of parliament pledged to his constituents, for carrying on the African trade; concluded by declaring that the merchants of Liverpool were determined on contesting to the last its principle. Pitt observed, that no man could dispute the *principle* of a bill intended solely to protect from injury and outrage unfortunate individuals consigned to slavery.

Fox himself, while he endeavoured to defend Lord Penrhyn, did not sustain with less energy the proposed regulations; his enlarged and generous mind spurning, when engaged in the cause of humanity, all the little feelings of party. "With regard to the *principle* of the present measure," observed he, "I know too well the texture of my noble friend's mental formation, not to be certain that he never intended to oppose its *principle*, in the accurate sense of that term. It is the *truth* of the facts alledged as the foundation of the *bill*, that he means to contest. But how can any candid mind denominate calumnies, facts which are stated by a member of this house, who expressly declares that he does not wish his assertions to be credited, unless they shall be confirmed in every particular by witnesses at your bar? I, for one, do assume the facts. The *bill* now introduced may prove unfit to be adopted. Still it ought not to be postponed to another session; and if upon examination it can be made applicable to its object, we are bound as men to adopt

it." This powerful support from such a quarter proved at the moment irresistible. Lord Penrhyn, though unconvinced, yet attempting no reply, scarcely any further impediment to the progress of the *bill* was experienced during the course of that evening.

Impey, who had been rescued, rather than acquitted, on the charge relative to Nundcomar, yet had still to encounter five other accusations, including a variety of heinous crimes or offences, asserted to have been committed in his judicial capacity, during his residence in Bengal. The second of these charges, commonly denominated "The Patna Cause," had excited the condemnation of parliament, when intelligence of it first reached England in the year 1779. An act of the legislature had even been passed, for the indemnification of the unfortunate individuals who had suffered under the sentence pronounced against them by Impey. Sir Gilbert Elliot now moved to go into its consideration, but was stopped *in limine* by the attorney-general, on the ground of the *cause* itself having been appealed to the privy council, before which tribunal it must speedily be tried and decided. This ingenious and timely legal device, by which Sir Elijah was again snatched from imminent danger of impeachment, excited Burke's utmost indignation. In language the most intemperate, yet classic and elegant; for even in rage he could call

to his aid the writings of antiquity; he accused the East India Company of gross collusion, fraud, and villainy, in order to protect a man against whom they had originally appeared as prosecutors. Pitt supporting the attorney-general's argument, and making some severe personal reflections on the conduct of Burke towards Impey; "I do not desire the right honourable gentleman," exclaimed he, "to assume the office of being my historian. I have suffered many harsh observations from his predecessors on that bench. But I have suffered more from his foul and offensive breath, than from the aspersions of every minister who has gone before him." The chancellor of the exchequer, though not usually forbearing, yet half apologized for any harsh or unguarded expression which might have escaped him during the warmth of debate; adding, "I have not heard as many ministers as he has done: consequently I cannot remember the severe remarks which they may have applied to him. He has, however, sufficiently demonstrated his own oblivion of the severe observations that he has applied to other ministers." The consideration of "The Patna Cause," postponed for three months, was never again resumed.

*June.*—At the commencement of June, a great promotion took place in the higher departments of the law. Lord Mansfield, who had long *stopped the way, drew off*. After presiding more than thirty

years in the court of king's bench; enfeebled by bodily infirmities, though retaining all the vigour of his intellect; he retired at length from public life. His retreat would have been sooner accomplished, if he could have secured the succession to his office for Buller, one of the judges in that court. But Pitt refused to hear of any conditions. The chancellor likewise adhered firmly to Kenyon, whose deep knowledge of the laws, sustained by integrity of character, well qualified him for supplying the vacant seat. He was raised at the same time to the peerage. Arden became master of the rolls. In *his* person was exemplified the power of ministerial friendship to supply every defect, and to conduct the object of its predilection to the greatest dignities, as well as honours and employments. The last act of Pitt's first administration, in the spring of 1801, was to remove Arden from the rolls, to the chief justiceship of the court of common pleas. Nor did his attachment stop there, Arden being immediately afterwards created Lord Alvanley. His good fortune in thus reaching the house of peers is the more remarkable, as he died just before Pitt's second entrance on office in 1804.

I have designated by the name of *friendship* the minister's regard for Arden, because though he was not endowed with those great legal abilities which usually conduct to the eminences of the law, yet he manifested no want of talent, at

least in parliament. But to what cause except favouritism can we ascribe Pitt's predilection towards other individuals whom it might be invidious to name ; some of whom he successively placed, first at the board of admiralty, and afterwards at that of the treasury ? It would be difficult for Pitt's warmest admirers to assign any public motive or foundation for these selections. When he made a country apothecary of Seven-oaks, in Kent, comptroller-general of the customs, the cause was obvious, if not venial. He had obtained the hand of the minister's niece in marriage. For the *marquisate* conferred on Lord Abercorn, and the rank of *an earl's daughter* given at that nobleman's request to Miss Cecil Hamilton ; as well as for *Lord Carrington's* introduction into the British house of peers ; there may have been solid and weighty, though not apparent or ostensible reasons. Nor do I mean to deny, that among the long list of individuals whom he raised and employed, between 1784 and 1805, the far greater part were men of merit and capacity. But Pitt, disinterested, elevated, and superior to injustice, as he proved himself in general, was not exempt in particular instances from great prejudice, and as great partiality.

To return to the legal promotions at this period ; Macdonald succeeded to the vacant place of attorney-general. He has not, however, like Arden, ever entered the house of peers. After presiding



nearly twenty years in the court of exchequer, as chief baron, Macdonald condescended in 1813 to accept a baronetage. By the transfer of Kenyon, Arden, and Macdonald, Scott became solicitor-general. *His* rise resulted from a combination of talent, labour, and character. Neither noble birth, nor favour, nor alliances, produced it. Pitt's friendship he indeed acquired and enjoyed, because he earned it by great exertions. Such were the qualities by which Lord Eldon finally attained the peerage, as well as the great seal; and such are the qualifications by which, at this hour, in January 1820, he holds his high employment.

During the months of March, April, and May, Hastings's trial had advanced by slow gradations, impeded at every step by the examination of witnesses and recapitulation of evidence. But, towards the beginning of June, as the prorogation of parliament approached, Sheridan felt that the time was arrived for his entrance on the theatre of Westminster Hall, and he had already thoroughly rehearsed his part. Never perhaps was public expectation raised so high as on his appearance; and never, I believe, in the history of modern ages, was it so completely gratified! On the 3rd, 5th, and 6th of June,—for on the 4th, being the royal birth-day, the trial did not proceed,—he spoke during many successive hours. The audience comprized almost every individual illustrious or respectable, which the capital could furnish, of

both sexes; forming a most august, imposing, and interesting spectacle. Probably, two-thirds of the English peers and peeresses, accompanied by their daughters, were present on the occasion. Even the season of the year, when the hall of Rufus (across the gloom of which the eye could scarcely penetrate in winter) was illuminated by the beams of a vivid sun, augmented, while it displayed, the grandeur of the scene. Every part of that vast edifice was crowded to excess.

Sheridan, accustomed to study theatrical effect at Drury-lane, did not neglect to observe its principles, or to practise its rules, on this great national stage, surrounded by all the rank, beauty, and talent of the metropolis. In fact, the majesty of the tribunal was half swallowed up and forgotten in the contemplation of the surrounding assemblage; among which *females* formed, if not the largest, at least the most attractive portion. To *them*, indeed, the orator did not neglect indirectly to address much of his discourse: more fortunate in that point of view than the great orators of antiquity, whose audience was exclusively composed of men. He enjoyed likewise another advantage above the accusers of Strafford, Danby, and Oxford; whose alledged crimes (domestic treason, or misdemeanors committed within the realm,) limited the prosecutor to matters of fact, and admitted little scope for the imagination. But, in the present case, a wide field of descrip-

tion expanded itself along the banks of the Ganges and the Jumna ; while the subject, which depicted the woes of Asiatic princesses, was in itself well calculated to make a deep impression on the other sex. Many of Sheridan's pictures were likewise so highly coloured, and so magically wrought up, as to produce an almost electric shock. Perhaps, a less diffuse oration, more subdued in tone, more compressed in its matter, might have far better answered the ends of justice. But, who that knew Sheridan, his mode of life, his habits, his character, and even his manner of subsistence, could believe that he was solely impelled by the abstract love of justice? He embraced the occasion, as it allowed him to display his prodigious oratorical powers, while he sustained his party, and gratified his ardent love of fame. His success placed him on an eminence which no public man in either house of parliament has attained in my time. The most ardent admirers of Burke, of Fox, and of Pitt, allowed that they had been outdone, as orators, by Sheridan.

*6th June.*—At the close of the last of these three memorable days, when the house of commons met, subsequent to the adjournment of the peers from the trial; Mr. Burges, who had moved for the account specifying the mode in which the public money issued for Hastings's trial had been expended by the managers, rose a second time.

He then briefly observed, that no vote or declaration of that assembly had ever authorized the managers of Mr. Hastings's prosecution to employ counsel. Having next expressed his disbelief that there existed any precedent for it in our parliamentary history during the progress of past impeachments; he demanded whether peculiar circumstances of difficulty had arisen on the present occasion, that rendered necessary their employment. Whatever legal doubts might occur, he said, there were to be found among the managers themselves, individuals learned in the law of England, competent to solve every question. In fact, three of them — namely, Adam, Anstruther, and Michael Angelo Taylor — had all been bred and called to the bar. With respect to the expence of the trial, he remarked, that though it had been estimated only at about eight thousand pounds, it already amounted to fifteen thousand, and would exceed eighteen thousand before the end of the session. Burges concluded by moving, that "the solicitors for the prosecution do present from time to time an account of the expences incurred, at the bar of the house."

Some moments having elapsed without any individual rising to second Burges's motion, Burke presented himself to the Speaker's eye, under great and visible agitation. "I do not mean," said he, "either to second, or to resist, the present proposition; but simply to congratulate

the mover on his having selected this glorious day, after the splendid exhibition which we have recently witnessed, when thousands hung with rapture on my honourable friend's accents, for examining the items of a solicitor's bill." Then diverging to the oration just pronounced in Westminster Hall, he lavished on it the highest encomiums: encomiums unquestionably well deserved. Yet when Burke, after enumerating "the variety of information, the beauty of diction, the force of expression, the astonishing diversity of composition, and the numberless graces which met in Sheridan's speech;" — when he added, "the pure sentiments of morality with which it abounded," many persons found it difficult to resist thinking of *Joseph Surface*, in his own "School for Scandal." Certainly, the life and practice of the orator himself did not furnish the best commentary on that text. "Instead of resolving ourselves," continued Burke, "into a committee of miserable accounts, let us, like the Romans after Scipio's victories, go and thank the gods for this day's triumph in Westminster Hall! As to myself, I have been too highly strained, and my mind is not sufficiently relaxed, after the sublime repast of which I have just partaken, to sink my thoughts to the level of such an enquiry." This beautiful description of his feelings recalls the attempt of our first father to pourtray his overwhelming emotions, when Milton makes him say,

“ My earthly by his heav’nly overpower’d,  
Which it had long stood under ; strain’d to the height  
In that celestial colloquy sublime,  
As with an object that excels the sense,  
Dazzled and spent, sunk down.”

Burke, nevertheless, quickly resuming his ordinary mode of expressing himself when irritated, added, “ I disdain to notice the present subject. Call the solicitors to the bar, and examine them. Meanwhile I shall order such services as I think proper, till the house may command me to desist.”

Fox, with much more command of temper, admitted that the employment of counsel on such a prosecution was, he believed, new ; but subjoined his own opinion, that their assistance was indispensably necessary to its success. The chancellor of the exchequer, conscious how delicate was his position — between the care of the public purse, over which it was his official duty to watch, and the danger of exposing himself to the accusation of impeding the trial, — steered a middle course. “ With respect to the number of counsel employed,” observed Pitt, “ I have doubted whether two civilians are wanted. Nevertheless, if the managers declare them to be requisite, I think they should be retained. Respecting the general expence attending the impeachment ; that point, serious as it is, must be governed by due attention to the nature of the case.” *Burges’s motion*

still remained without any person to second it ; till at length Mr. Drake, whom I have so lately mentioned,—and who, when impelled by his feelings, or by his principles, set at defiance all personal considerations,—after concurring fully in the eulogiums bestowed on Sheridan's eloquence, yet ventured to add, that he must stand up the friend of economy. Sir William Dolben, having first deprecated Burke's resentment, proceeded a step further, and seconded the *motion*. A division must therefore have inevitably ensued, if Dundas had not prevented it by a manœuvre. In order to extricate the minister his friend from a situation of some embarrassment, he moved the next *order of the day* ; which being acquiesced in by all sides, an adjournment immediately took place. The managers consequently remained without pecuniary control of any kind.

One of the most splendid instances of parliamentary, or, more properly to speak, of national sympathy and munificence, to be found in the history of mankind, was exhibited at this time in the house of commons. That numerous body of men known by the denomination of "loyalists," who in consequence of the American war had not only been driven from their paternal seats, but had beheld their whole property confiscated, necessarily looked to Great Britain for some remuneration. Though Sir George Rodney's victory over De Grasse, in April 1782, had restored our

naval supremacy in the West Indies, yet the circumstances of depression under which Lord Shelburne signed the general peace with France and America, about nine months afterwards, incapacitated him from exacting any conditions in favour of these expatriated individuals. Neither magnanimity, nor pity, nor generosity, could operate on the minds of their Trans-Atlantic countrymen; accessible only to considerations of the most interested or vindictive description. It is not on the banks of the Delawar, or of the Hudson, that even in the nineteenth century we can hitherto look for many of the virtues that elevate and adorn our nature. The arts of gain, and the science of naval warfare, combined with a grasping policy;—such seem to be, down to the present time, the characteristic features of the Washington cabinet. We may hope, and even safely assume, that the moral current will run purer as it flows on; but not till another race of statesmen have succeeded to the Jeffersons, the Madisons, and the Munros, — the servile instruments of Bonaparte's vengeance, or of their enmity to England.—To return to the "loyalists," technically so termed; parliament having referred their claims to commissioners for examination, Pitt now proposed a plan for compensating the sufferers. The aggregate amount of their losses considerably exceeded two millions sterling, exclusive of nearly five hundred thousand pounds



already issued for their temporary relief. His intention, he said, was to liquidate from the public purse above twelve hundred thousand pounds of this demand; the claimants being divided into classes, and receiving either the whole, or a proportion of their claim, according to its magnitude. Principles of the most liberal, well-matured, and enlightened equity, regulated the sums respectively distributed to the different individuals.

The conduct observed upon this occasion by the chiefs of opposition, reflected on them the highest honour; especially if we recollect the acrimonious terms in which they were accustomed, during the course of the American war, to inveigh against *the loyalists*. Burke rising early in the debate, declared that he never had given a vote with more satisfaction. "For, though the objects of the present national bounty," added he, "have not a claim on us founded in absolute right, yet we are bound in equity and justice to consider their demands. It will form a new and a noble instance of public generosity. In vain would we seek for a parallel in our own history, after the restoration of Charles the Second, when only the insignificant sum of eighty thousand pounds was voted by this house for distribution among the suffering royalists." — "I rejoice that America has not enjoyed the distinction which must have resulted to her, as a people, and as

a government, from compensating the unhappy *loyalists*. It would nevertheless have been a wise manner of setting up for themselves in the world." Fox even exceeded Burke in his testimonies of approbation to the measure. Throughout the whole discussion, no difference of sentiment occurred between the opposite sides of the house, except a generous emulation to outdo each other in extending relief.

Fox's expostulations and suggestions even induced Pitt to yield on more than one point, and to augment the sum proposed to be given by parliament. At the head of the list stood Mr. Harford, natural son of Lord Baltimore; an eccentric nobleman well known in the beginning of the present reign, by the criminal prosecution which Miss Woodcock carried on against him. Mr. Harford had lost a princely fortune, or rather revenue, bequeathed to him by his father, situate in the province of Maryland. The minister, convinced by Fox's reasoning and calculations, which other members sustained, finally consented to add twenty thousand pounds to the seventy thousand originally destined for Mr. Harford. I do not recollect any dissentient voice, except one, namely, Hussey; a man most conscientious, and most frugal of the public resources. Even *he* only expressed a doubt whether the claim of the "*loyalists*" was founded in right, or was matter of mere grace and favour; for which hesitation Burke did

not scruple to censure him. Such a donative, so conferred, by a nation which had scarcely recovered the loss of her colonies, forms a glorious monument in the British annals, and stands alone in the records of modern times.

10th — 17th June. — With the compensation voted to the “loyalists” might be said to terminate the public business of the session. Nor would the prorogation of parliament have been delayed, if the unexpected introduction of Sir William Dolben’s *bill* for regulating the African trade had not protracted its deliberations. Regardless of all considerations drawn from policy, or from narrow views of commercial profit; unmoved even by the remonstrances and opposition of some among his own colleagues in the cabinet; Pitt steadily extended his support to that humane and beneficent measure. To so elevated a line of ministerial conduct, posterity will not assuredly refuse their admiration. Every effort at procrastination was exerted by the enemies of the *bill*, who compensated for the paucity of their numbers by their pertinacity; the advanced season of the year offering them great facilities for prolonging or impeding the debates. In defiance of evidence the most incontrovertible, they persisted to deny the truth of the cruelties practised on the captives during their transportation, and the mortality consequent on such treatment. The facts nevertheless having been proved at the bar to the

conviction of every unprejudiced person, the chancellor of the exchequer moved that "the operation of the bill should be *retrospective*, and that it should commence from the *tenth* of the existing month." We must admit that such an *ex post facto* law or principle, if applied to ordinary cases, would be not only contrary to good policy, but even subversive of justice. Neither could it be forgotten, that a *circular letter* had been officially addressed by order of the treasury, some weeks earlier, to the principal merchants concerned in the African trade, assuring them of the determination of government not to agitate the question of abolition during the actual session. Lord Penrhyn strongly contended, that the present act would therefore be an infraction of ministerial faith; and when combined with the new regulations proposed by Sir William Dolben, for limiting the number of slaves permitted to be put on board the vessels engaged in the trade, would operate *virtually* as an abolition.

A statesman of a lofty mind, of stern decision, as well as of unbending principles of moral action,—and only such a statesman,—would have ventured after this reclamation, to take on himself personally the responsibility of so strong a measure. Every motive, drawn from considerations of a selfish or interested nature, impelled him to postpone any regulation of the slave-trade, to another year. He well knew that the chancellor, whose intractability

rendered him always difficult to guide, entertained insurmountable objections to the present *bill*. These objections Lord Thurlow was believed to have infused into the king; who, from other causes relating individually to himself, anxiously anticipated the close of the session. Nor was the chancellor the only member of administration adverse to the proposition. Even among the persons seated near Pitt on the treasury bench, connected with him by friendship, and acting officially under him, I know that there were enemies. One of them was Rose. Dundas remained silent, and took no part. Burke and Fox, after expressing their warmest approbation of the principle, left Pitt to carry it into execution. They had in fact withdrawn from the house, considering the session as at an end. None of these impediments could, however, shake his resolution. Rising towards the close of the debate, he not only declared himself unequivocally favourable to Dolben's measure, but expressed his firm conviction that the regulations specified would in no degree effect the abolition of the trade. "If, however," continued he, "such should be their operation; — if this nefarious traffic cannot be prosecuted under the restrictions proposed; *I now retract my declaration made on a former day, against going to the general question.* Late as is the season of the year, I am confident that the house will support me in my efforts to rescue those unfortunate

Africans now about to be purchased by British traders, from the jaws of destruction, and from the iron hand of oppression."

This energetic declaration, which sufficiently proved how great a change of opinion relative to the African trade had been operated on his mind within a few weeks, terminated the discussion. On the division, only *five* members voted against Dolben's motion, while fifty-six sustained it; and the *bill* having passed, was carried up on the following day to the house of peers. We may confidently assert, that no minister who presided in the councils of England during the course of the eighteenth century, except Pitt, would have thus sacrificed a commercial, and consequently, a political, as well as a financial object, to a moral principle. Every minor consideration gave way to the impulse of humanity in his bosom. Looking beyond the exchequer, he legislated as Plato would have done for his ideal republic. Like Umbricius, he seemed to say,

— "tanti tibi non sit opaci

Omnis arena Tagi, quodque in mare volvitur aurum,

Ut somno careas."

That neither Mr. Pelham, nor Lord North, nor the Earl of Shelburne, would so have acted in similar circumstances, I imagine, will be easily conceded, even by their admirers. If any individual in our own time possessed sufficient elevation of character, and disregard of consequences,

to have emulated the same praise, that person was Fox. In correct moral deportment he could not enter into competition with Pitt: but his natural benevolence, enlargement of mind, fearlessness of disposition, and love of glory, would have impelled him to adopt any measure, however bold or hazardous, which promised to augment the sum of human happiness, and to rescue his fellow-creatures from misery.

While I do justice to Pitt's line of action, and eulogize it as in my opinion it deserves, I cannot omit to mention another individual who highly distinguished himself on that evening. I mean, Beaufoy; a person already noticed more than once in the course of these memoirs. He spoke at great length in favour of Dolben's proposition; and though his eloquence might be criticized as rhetorical, florid, and diffuse, yet it teemed with information, while it displayed uncommon powers of description. I am persuaded that the appalling facts which he enumerated, relative to the treatment of the slaves; and in particular, respecting the mortality that took place among them, during the voyage across the Atlantic to the West Indies; tended strongly to produce the decided part taken by the chancellor of the exchequer. Beaufoy, arguing from disclosures reluctantly admitted by witnesses at the bar, or rather extorted from them in the progress of their examination, carried the calculation of deaths to an awful point of magnitude.

Among the arguments used by the supporters of the African trade to justify its continuance, they urged the utter inutility of our relinquishing it, as we could not prevent other nations from carrying it on ; in particular, France. But Beaufoy strongly contested this assertion. " Let the ultimate decision prove what it may here in England," observed he, " its existence among the French cannot long be perpetuated. Already, not only the philosophers and men of letters in that country are earnest for its extinction : two of her most enlightened ministers, Turgot and Necker, have recorded their detestation of its cruelty and guilt." Lord Penrhyn smiling contemptuously, " I perceive," rejoined Beaufoy, " that the noble lord treats with levity my mention of literary men. Their influence must nevertheless be great among a people where opinion maintains sovereign sway. But does he not know that Turgot and Necker, and they only among the ministers of Louis the Sixteenth, have exhorted their countrymen to reclaim their antient constitution? *Is he ignorant that at this very hour the voice of Freedom has already penetrated the recesses of Versailles?*" Scarcely thirteen months elapsed after these words were pronounced, before the French revolution was consummated by the capture of the Bastile.

18th—30th June. I have already stated that Dolben's *bill*, in consequence of Pitt's decided support, having passed with a *retrospective* clause



by a proportion of more than eleven to one, had been carried up to the other house. On its arrival there, it appeared however to be in imminent danger of rejection. Few instances have occurred in our parliamentary history, of a more formidable opposition than it encountered. Nor did the obstacles to its progress originate, as in ordinary cases, with the regular opponents of government. On the contrary, it experienced from *them* a favourable reception, while its most violent enemies were either members of the cabinet, or great officers of state, closely connected with administration. At their head stood the chancellor, who not only declaimed against the measure itself as unwise, but treated the *retrospective* clause as contrary to the pledged faith of ministers, and a violation of their own engagements. Lord Sydney, one of the secretaries of state, whose connexion by marriage with the chancellor of the exchequer formed his best security for continuing in office a single day, joined Lord Thurlow. The Duke of Chandos, though holding the employment of lord steward, yet spoke and voted against the clause. Even Lord Hawkesbury declared it most unjust, to subject any ship to a legal penalty, before the existence of the law which enacted the penalty. Against so numerous and able a phalanx, the Duke of Richmond was left to contend almost alone. The remaining members of administration stood aloof. Lord Howe, who soon afterwards quitted the admiralty, took no part. The Marquis

of Carmarthen observed a total silence ; and Lord Camden, I believe, never once attended in his place. Such was the state and aspect of the house of peers, when the *bill* made its appearance among them. It required all the noble pertinacity of Pitt's character, supported by motives drawn from some of the highest and purest sources of human action, to withstand, and finally to surmount, so great a combination of talents and of influence.

The Duke of Richmond, to whom Pitt committed the task of defending the measure ; and who performed it with zeal, if not with ability ; admitted that if its *retrospective* operation was permitted to remain, it would become indispensable to insert a clause indemnifying the persons concerned in the trade for any losses they might sustain in consequence. On a subsequent day he tendered a clause to that effect. But Lord Bathurst, (who, though sinking under age and bodily infirmities, yet, as having formerly held the great seal during more than seven years, inspired respect when a legal question was agitated,) maintained that no compensation which the legislature could propose or adopt would meet the case. Two members of the upper house, who had been elevated to the peerage by their illustrious actions, and the former of whom had witnessed the actual treatment of the Africans throughout the West Indies ; —I mean, Lord Rodney, and Lord Heathfield ; —denied the facts, on the assumption of which as certain the bill principally rested.

Among its most strenuous, though not disinterested opposers, might be reckoned the Duke of Chandos. In right of his duchess, whose first husband, Mr. Elletson, had been governor of Jamaica, he possessed a very considerable property in that island. Lord Hawkesbury moved, that instead of a *retrospective* operation, the *bill* should only begin to take effect from the 10th of June in the ensuing year, 1789. Throughout a speech which displayed much embarrassment, Lord Sydney endeavoured to reconcile his deference for Pitt with his opposition to the measure. While in language of admiration and respect for the motives by which the chancellor of the exchequer was actuated, he did justice to that minister's elevation of mind, as well as purity of intention, he lamented that a subject of such deep importance should have been brought forward at so advanced a period of the session. Yet, he added, however much he might regret the circumstance, and peculiarly its *retrospective* effect, nevertheless, as the *bill* had been brought in, it should receive from him no further opposition.

But all these measures of delicacy were spurned by Thurlow. Notwithstanding Pitt's personal appearance on the steps of the throne, the chancellor, quitting the woolsack several times in the course of the debate, neither spared his invectives, nor abstained from the most contemptuous expressions. The *bill*, he said, as it was drawn up,

could only be denominated nonsense; and the amendments proposed, if inserted, would render it more incapable of being carried into execution. With gloomy indignation, he levelled the severest sarcasms against the spirit of morbid or injudicious humanity which had originated such a measure at such a time. "I do not hesitate," continued he, "to declare, that if the *five days' fit of philanthropy* which has just awoke, after sleeping for more than twenty years, had remained in repose during another summer, it would, in my opinion, have displayed more wisdom, than thus to take up a business piece-meal, after publicly proclaiming that it should not be agitated at all till the ensuing session of parliament." Nor did he fail to allude in language of strong condemnation to the *circular letter* sent by order of the treasury to the merchants engaged in the African trade. Vainly the Duke of Richmond replied, that the letter in question referred solely to the *abolition*, not to the *regulation*, of the commerce; and therefore that no infraction of ministerial faith had been, or would be committed. "The noble duke," answered Lord Thurlow, "or any other individual, may put whatever construction they think proper on the letter: *I* am content to understand it according to the acceptance in which the persons take it to whom it is addressed." We must admit that throughout the whole proceeding Thurlow argued as a statesman; Pitt

acted as a moralist. Policy alone guided the chancellor; principle and humanity impelled the minister. Posterity will judge between them. *My admiration now follows Pitt*; but I will candidly own that at the time when the events happened which are here related, I strongly inclined to embrace an opposite opinion.

*30th June.*—New alterations took place down to the end of June; when the Duke of Richmond brought forward the clause by which all persons who in consequence of the operation of the *bill* might sustain pecuniary loss were entitled to claim compensation. Commissioners, named under the great seal, were appointed to take cognizance and to decide finally on the justice of the demands made by the claimants. But here again the chancellor interposed with numerous objections. *A jury*, not commissioners, he maintained, ought to assess the quota of compensation to be allowed the merchants. This opinion he supported with strong reasons, and no member of the cabinet, except the Duke of Richmond, took any part in the debate. After demonstrating how inadequate, arbitrary, and liable to error or deception, were the provisions of the proposed clause of indemnification, Thurlow added, “The warmest friend of the present measure cannot feel more anxiety than I do, that it may not disgrace this house in the opinion of the country.” Lord Bathurst concurred in all the chancellor’s positions.

A division at length took place, when Pitt triumphed by a majority of only *two* votes ; twelve peers concurring with Lord Thurlow, while fourteen divided against him. So violent a contest on public grounds, between two members of the same administration, in one of the houses of parliament, yet not followed by the resignation of either, might be considered as a sort of political paradox. I believe it has no parallel since the accession of the house of Hanover. Its singularity is augmented when we reflect that one of the ministers who held in his hand the great seal, was by his office the constitutional keeper of the king's conscience ; while the other presided both at the treasury and at the exchequer. Their difference of opinion produced however no ostensible breach, though neither of them was distinguished by placability of disposition. Mutual convenience smothered their animosity, without extinguishing the recollection : but time matured these principles of disunion into a flame, which finally drove the chancellor out of the cabinet.

*4th July.*—The “ Slave Regulation Bill ” was destined to undergo fresh attacks on its return to the house of commons ; the amendments which had been made by the peers compelling Dolben to bring in a new *bill*. As the very advanced season of the year rendered it almost impossible to procure attendance for the discussion of a measure which, whatever altercation it might

have produced between Lord Thurlow and Pitt, was not a party question, the enemies of the whole transaction renewed their efforts to overturn it. They were joined by a new auxiliary in the person of Gamon, member for Winchester, whom the Duke of Chandos brought into parliament; the duchess being his sister. Delay, independent either of argument or of eloquence, it was obvious, would of itself frustrate all the minister's plans. He remained nevertheless firm, determined as he was to surmount by perseverance every attempt of its opponents. No line of conduct less decided would have proved effectual. Having demonstrated that the amendments and alterations introduced by the peers were obviously favourable to the petitioners against the bill, Pitt induced the lower house to refuse hearing counsel. He concluded by moving to give bounties calculated for preserving the lives of the slaves during the voyage from the coast of Africa to the West Indies. All these suggestions meeting with nearly unanimous consent, the *bill* was a second time sent up to the lords, where it experienced no further impediment on the part of the chancellor. The prorogation of parliament, which had been so long delayed, would therefore have taken place immediately, if it had not been discovered that an informality in framing the *bill* produced the necessity of renewing it a third time.

8th—11th July.—But Pitt was not to be driven from his purpose by any obstacles. The greatest

difficulty consisted in procuring the number of members requisite for placing and keeping the Speaker in the chair, at a time when the session might be regarded as virtually at an end. Many individuals who commonly supported administration were altogether inimical to the measure; and the lord chancellor had, even on the treasury bench, more than one adherent. The enemies of Dolben's proposition might easily frustrate its success, by merely *counting* the house; an immediate adjournment being indispensable if there were not forty members present, as soon as the circumstance became the subject of a *motion*. Even *treasury letters* could not enforce attendance. Lord North, under similar embarrassments, would unquestionably have suspended the business till the following session. Not so Pitt. Sir William Dolben having moved to read his *bill* a second time, new petitions from Liverpool, of the same tenor with those antecedently presented, were brought up; while Mr. Gamon moved to postpone the second reading for three months. On a division, *thirty-five* members supported the minister, one of whom was Sheridan. Only *two* votes were found to oppose the measure. The *four* tellers completed the number to *forty-one*; being *one* more than was absolutely necessary to legalize the proceeding.

Before the house adjourned, the *bill* went through the committee, was reported, engrossed, read a third time, passed, and finally carried up



by Dolben in person to the bar of the peers. Lord Thurlow received it with indignant silence. All these steps took place on the 8th of July. No debate or conversation whatever arose respecting it in the house of lords. On the morning of the 11th, the *bill* was returned to the commons, and instantly sent back, in order that it might receive the royal assent, which was given to it a few hours afterwards. Then, and not till then, Pitt allowed the king to prorogue the parliament. I have descended to these minute details, because no feature of Pitt's political life places in a more conspicuous point of view the force of his moral principles of action, and his inflexible determination to pursue the path which they dictated to him. The *Slave Regulation Act*, which was ultimately carried by thirty-five votes in a sort of *rump parliament*, laid the foundation of the *Slave Abolition Act*, in the course of the following year.

*July.*—The court of peers which sate in Westminster Hall on the trial of Hastings did not wait for the prorogation in order to suspend their proceedings. As early as the middle of June, they adjourned to the ensuing session, after having been assembled in their judicial capacity only thirty-five times during a space of more than four months. Burke, Fox, and Sheridan furnished the principal aliment of the prosecution. The last-named individual, more master of himself than Burke, never borne away or convulsed by

passion ; an actor, even when he seemed to be most deeply agitated ;—Sheridan, while he shunned these extremes, as carefully avoided the repetitions in which Fox frequently indulged. The long intervals which elapsed between the grand exhibitions of oratory were filled up by the inferior managers ; at whose head, *facile princeps*, must be placed Grey.

If the month of June had exhibited important changes in the higher offices of the law, July witnessed a similar alteration at the admiralty. The divisions of the 18th and the 29th of April, in the house of commons, eventually produced Lord Howe's resignation ; and Pitt, availing himself of his complete ascendancy at St. James's, instantly substituted his brother, Lord Chatham, in the vacant office. He was then about thirty-two years of age. In that high, efficient, and arduous employment, notwithstanding his recognized inaptitude for executing its duties, the same paramount ministerial influence retained him considerably more than six years. It is true that during the far greater part of the period, the nation continued to enjoy peace. But, towards the conclusion of 1794, the augmenting calamities of a foreign war, which demanded corresponding energies in every department at home, rendered it necessary to supply Lord Chatham's place with a person of greater application, if not superior talent.

After the termination of the second unfortu-

nate campaign in the Low Countries, where the Duke of York commanded the British forces, his total want of military skill had excited such universal clamour, that Pitt, however reluctant, at length determined to lay the matter before the king. He did so ; and suggested, as the only means of allaying the national discontent, to entrust with the supreme command a general of more experience, as well as more responsible, than a second son of the crown. But his majesty replied, " Mr. Pitt, you mistake the matter. It is not my son, but your brother, who has produced the clamour of which you complain. It is the delay, mismanagement, and want of all energy or exertion at the admiralty, much more than the errors or misfortunes of our arms on the Continent, which have involved my councils in disgrace." Shortly after this conversation, which was long and full of asperity, Lord Spencer replaced the Earl of Chatham as first lord of the admiralty. Pitt took care however to provide for his brother's comfort, as well as to retain his vote in the cabinet, by conferring on him the dignified sinecure of lord privy seal.

If ever any individual drew a prize in the great lottery of human life, that man was the present Earl of Chatham. Having been brought up to the military profession, he went out to America previous to the commencement of our contest with the colonies ; but was recalled to this country

by his father, who disapproved the war carried on for their subjugation. In 1779 he commanded the grenadier company in the newly-raised Rutland regiment, crossed the Atlantic a second time, passed some months at St. Lucie and Barbadoes, and returned to Europe by Gibraltar. He told me that he rode post the whole way from thence to Madrid, on his road to England. At scarcely three-and-twenty, he had succeeded to an earldom, to a pension of four thousand pounds a year settled on the title, and to the estate of Burton Pynsent. Lord Chatham inherited likewise his illustrious father's form and figure; but not his mind. *That* present of nature fell to the second son. There was a third, named James, whom I never personally knew; and who died at the age of nineteen, in the West Indies, a lieutenant in the navy. The present earl so strongly resembles his father in face and person, that if he were to enter the house of peers, dressed after the mode of George the Second's reign, and his head enveloped in a full-bottomed tie wig, (as we see Mr. Pitt designated in his portraits,) the spectators might fancy that the great statesman was returned once more upon earth. Rising above the ordinary height, thin, and elegant in his formation, Lord Chatham's air and address announce a person of rank; but his manners seem to prohibit all familiarity, and almost to forbid approach. Yet, in private society, when I have happened to be

seated next to him at table, he unbent, and became pleasing, as well as communicative in conversation. Constitutionally and habitually taciturn, cold, reserved, lofty, repulsive, his silence served as a mantle to protect him from close inspection. It did more; for it inspired respect, as though it concealed great talents under that veil. Many persons, indeed, have given him credit for judgment and capacity; but his whole life proves the contrary. Two vices or defects, each of which might render inefficient the brightest intellectual endowments, even if they existed, have accompanied him from youth to age. I mean, insuperable indolence, and total want of economy.

However incredible, it is nevertheless true, that while presiding at the admiralty board, even in time of war, he seldom was visible till noon. I might indeed say, that he rarely rose from his bed much before that hour. Naval officers consequently found it difficult, or impossible to obtain an audience. After he quitted his employment, it became common to call him in derision, the *late* first lord of the admiralty. Even when commanding the British army before Flushing in 1809, his tent could not be entered nor was the general to be seen before a late hour. Of the talents attributed to him by flattery, he has exhibited no proof. I believe, he never opened his lips in the house of peers, since he first took

his seat in that assembly ; but between 1784 and 1788, when his brother had him in training for high employment, he used most assiduously to attend the debates in the house of commons ; placing himself always in the members' gallery, over the treasury bench. It would have been fortunate for himself, as well as for his country, if he had never been employed in a military command. He possessed, indeed, neither activity, experience, ardour, nor any of the qualities that usually produce success. It is difficult to conceive upon what rational principle his majesty selected him to command the expedition against Walcheren in 1809 ; — for he unquestionably owed the appointment solely to the king, though the subservient cabinet of that day improperly acquiesced in the choice.

I saw him embark at Ramsgate, for Flanders, with the Earl of Rosslyn, and the Marquis of Huntley. All men of reflection anticipated the result of an enterprize conducted by such a leader. Bernadotte, who now sits on the throne of Gustavus Adolphus, of Christina, and of Charles the Twelfth, was enabled, by the delays and indecision of the English commander, to render Bonaparte an incalculable service, in saving Antwerp. A general of rapid and decisive movements would have dashed up the Schelde, before the enemy could be prepared to receive or to oppose him. Lord Chatham's trophies were limited to the

capture of Flushing. If, however, he gathered no laurels there, I have been assured that he made a considerable sum of prize-money at Middelburg. Dalrymple's convention of Cintra, signed in the preceding year, had covered him, perhaps unjustly, with obloquy. Similar was the effect of the Walcheren expedition on the Earl of Chatham. He will no more indeed be employed again in the field, than would Sir George Prevost, if he were alive.

Lord Chatham's incapacity of restraining his expences within any moderate limits, tended, even more than his want of energy or activity, to bring him down from the eminence on which birth and fortune placed him.

12th July.—No individual about the court, or in either house of parliament, felt probably more delight at his emancipation from the metropolis, and from public business, than the king. He had long anticipated, not without some impatience, the *prorogation*; which, contrary to general usage, in consequence of the delay occasioned by the "Slave Regulation Bill," took place on a *Friday*. A principle of humanity in the present instance prolonged the session. It was a different motive to which Pulteney, Earl of Bath, attributed the meeting of parliament on a *Friday*, when he composed his elegant and classic impromptu on George the Second and the Countess of Yarmouth. During the spring of the year

1788, his majesty, who had nearly attained the age of fifty, found himself attacked by symptoms of indisposition, which his physicians pronounced to be gouty. Probably, the humour might have exhausted its force in the extremities, in the shape of gout, if his majesty had eat and drunk like almost any other private gentleman. But his natural disposition to temperance, encreased by a dread of becoming corpulent, and perhaps other apprehensions, impelled him to adopt the habits of an ascetic. The most simple food, taken in very moderate quantity, constituted his repasts. Yet his German origin shewed itself in his predilections :—for sour crout was one of his favourite dishes ; as Handel's or Mozart's music charmed him more than that of Pergolesi, or of Paësiello. His ordinary beverage at table was only composed of a sort of lemonade, which he dignified with the name of *cup* ; though a monk of La Trappe might have drunk it without any infraction of his monastic vow.

The king usually eat so little, and so rapidly, that those persons who dined with him could not satisfy their appetite, unless by continuing their meal after the sovereign had finished, which was contrary to the old etiquette. He was so sensible of this fact, and so considerate, that when he dined at Kew, without the queen, and only attended by two equerries, he always said, “ Don't regard me : take your own time.” One of them,



an intimate friend of mine, relating to me the particulars of these repasts, which were very comfortable, observed, "We know so well how soon the king has finished, that after we sit down at table not a word is uttered. All our attention is devoted to expedition. Yet, with the best diligence we can exert, before we have half dined, his majesty has already thrown himself back in his chair, and called for his *cup*, with which he concludes his meal." Napoleon's dinners were, if possible, even less convivial, and equally brief. He, whose hours decided the fate of nations, dedicated little time to the gratifications of the table. The late Marquis Cholmondeley, who had dined with him at the "*grand couvert*" in the Tuileries, in 1802, has frequently assured me, that from the moment they sate down, till the coffee was served, not more than forty-three or four minutes elapsed. They were then *bowed out*.

The late Earl Harcourt, who became master of the horse to Charlotte of Mecklenburg, was a nobleman of high breeding, well informed, and of a most correct deportment, though of manners somewhat constrained and formal. When he had the honour to receive and to entertain their majesties at Nuneham, on their road to visit Oxford, his countess, who was one of the ladies of the queen's bedchamber, said to him, "My lord, recollect that as soon as the king lays down his knife and fork,

you must do the same. You cannot continue to eat after he has ceased." Finding nevertheless that Lord Harcourt either did not, or would not, attend to her injunction, she was obliged to tread on his foot, in order to accelerate his movements. The queen by no means resembled her royal consort in this respect. No woman in the kingdom enjoyed herself more at table, or manifested a nicer taste in the article of wine. In consequence of his majesty's rarely drinking even a single glass, and of his well-known indifference about its flavour or quality, he seldom had any good wine, though he paid for it the best price. During several years, the wines served at the equerries' table were very indifferent. As they did not, however, think proper to make any complaint on the subject, it might so have continued without redress, if, by accident, the Prince of Wales, while on a visit at Windsor, had not chanced to dine with them. The instant that his royal highness tasted the claret, he pronounced sentence upon it. He did more: for he informed his father of the manner in which his wine-merchant treated him. The abuse was immediately corrected.

Two other motives, besides the apprehension of corpulency, impelled his majesty to practise unremitting abstinence. The first was a secret consciousness (which, however, he as carefully concealed, as his grandmother, Queen Caroline,

did her tendency to an internal rupture,) that the disease which menaced him could only be repressed by severe renunciations, and that it menaced his *head*. Why else did he inflict on himself, before he attained his thirtieth year, the loss of his hair? We know that shaving the head is one of the earliest and most indispensable operations performed on persons attacked with privation of intellect. He did not, we may safely assume, submit to it without strong reasons. It is with probability conjectured, that the disorder which seized him in the autumn of 1765, the nature of which was mysteriously withheld from the public, affected the brain. In order to subdue that tendency, he thought no prescription so effectual as spare and simple diet. "Junius" says, in a note annexed to his letter dated "3rd of April 1770," that the king was so agitated, in consequence of the remonstrance presented to him by the city of London, in the month of March of the same year; and so irritated at his inability to punish the lord mayor and sheriffs for their presumption in approaching him with such a paper; as to have "been obliged to live upon potatoes for three weeks, to keep off a malignant fever."

The second reason for denying himself any gratifications of appetite, was his great aversion to confinement. The king was not a studious man. He neither liked books, nor sedentary occupations,

nor convivial society, nor places of public diversion, if we except the theatre; nor cards, till his augmenting defect of sight compelled him sometimes to have recourse to the last-mentioned amusement. George the Third never enjoyed his existence so much as when in the open air; at times on foot; but generally on horseback; either following the hounds, which he did with great ardour; or at a review, where he was always animated; or inspecting his farms, or visiting his various improvements and embellishments round Windsor. It was his delight to mount his horse before the equerry in waiting could possibly be aware of it; often in severe or unpleasant weather, which rarely deterred him; always at an early hour. One of his equeries has assured me, that when thus surprized, he has been compelled to follow the king down Windsor Hill with scarcely time to pull up his stockings under his boots. No place about his majesty's court or person, so long as he retained his intellect, could indeed be less of a sinecure than the office of an equerry. The appointments were very inadequate to the fatigue and exertions of the post: a fact of which the king himself was so well aware, that he used to say he had fewer applications for the employment of equerry than for any other in his donation. Returning late from his excursion on horseback, after a very short time passed in the occupation of dress, he

sate down, surrounded by his family, at table. All indulgence he deprecated and avoided, as conducting to certain indisposition.

Among the noble individuals who formed the establishment of the king's bedchamber in 1788, was the Earl of Fauconberg; sprung from an antient and loyal family, though an ancestor of his had married one of Oliver's daughters. Being constitutionally subject to a violent scorbutic humour in his face, he frequently had recourse to the mineral waters of Cheltenham, then a small, obscure provincial town of the county of Gloucester. Its spring, though unquestionably endowed with powerful and salubrious qualities, yet during many years had fallen into neglect. Lord Fauconberg finding or conceiving that he derived great benefit from the water, purchased some land in its vicinity, where he constructed a house of moderate dimensions, which he named Bays Hill Lodge, situate on a gentle eminence, about three hundred paces from the spring. The king, who usually entered into much familiar conversation with the lord of the bedchamber in waiting, before he came out to begin his levees, often made enquiries of Lord Fauconberg respecting Cheltenham. His warm encomiums on the virtues of the mineral water, as well as on the beauty of the surrounding country, inspired his majesty with a wish to visit the place. Its privacy and simplicity formed additional recom-

mendations. Lord Fauconberg offered Bays Hill Lodge for his reception, which, though not very capacious, might nevertheless contain the part of the royal family destined to participate in the excursion. The physicians who were consulted expressing no disapprobation, the plan was finally settled to take place as soon as the public business would permit of its execution. Unfortunately, parliament remained sitting, as we have seen, till the 11th day of July. But such was the king's impatience to begin his journey, that after proroguing the two houses in person, and pronouncing a speech from the throne at three on Friday afternoon, he returned to St. James's, and drove down to Windsor. On the ensuing morning, before seven, their majesties, accompanied by the three eldest princesses, had already quitted the castle on their way to Cheltenham. They only stopped to take breakfast at Lord Harcourt's seat of Nuneham, and reached Bays Hill Lodge on the same afternoon at an early hour.

*12th—31st July.*—Here his majesty found himself, for the first time since his grandfather's decease, transformed in some degree from a sovereign into a country gentleman. No minister or secretary of state attended him. During near eight-and-twenty years of a stormy and calamitous reign, marked with the greatest national disasters, though set off by some days of glory, he had scarcely seen any part of his dominions. The

Nore, Coxe Heath, Portsmouth, and Oxford, formed almost the extent of his travels. At Cheltenham, he had left a hundred miles behind him the

*“Fumum et opes, strepitumque Romæ.”*

His mode of living might be deemed patriarchal ; more suited to the first ages of the world, than to the dissipated state of society towards the close of the eighteenth century. He visited the spring at so early an hour, that few of his subjects were found there to meet him. Constantly on horse-back, when the weather permitted, from eleven till three, he sat down at four to dinner ; strolled out, like a citizen, with his wife and daughters, on the public walk soon after seven ; and by eleven at night, every thing was as completely hushed at Bays Hill Lodge as in a farm-house.

The king was not even accompanied on this excursion by any of his usual attendants ; neither by a lord of the bedchamber, nor by an equerry. The Earl of Courtown, an Irish nobleman, who held the office of treasurer of the household ; himself a man of very moderate faculties, but of polite and pleasing manners ; followed his majesty to Cheltenham, by special invitation. So did the Honourable Stephen Digby, vice-chamberlain to the queen. They usually were his companions when he rode ; but he delighted to emancipate himself from all restraint, to walk out alone in the fields, and to enter into conversation with the

persons who accidentally fell in his way. He made likewise some excursions of pleasure and curiosity ; particularly to Gloucester, where, when visiting the cathedral, he appeared to contemplate with much interest the tomb of one of his unfortunate predecessors, on which is extended his recumbent figure. I mean, Edward the Second ; who, after his inhuman murder at Berkeley Castle, was conveyed for interment to Gloucester. The king, queen, and princesses drove over likewise, on a morning visit, to the classic seat of Lord Bathurst, the friend of Pope, at Oakley Grove. But on that occasion, as on every other, the king invariably declined all dinners or entertainments. Lord Fauconberg himself could not have paid more assiduous attention to the Cheltenham spring than did George the Third. He drank of it indeed so profusely, and its effects on him were so violent, that many persons, not without apparently good cause, attributed his subsequent temporary loss of reason to the irritation produced by the waters on his nervous system.

The two representatives for the town of Windsor in 1788 were the Earl of Mornington and Mr. Powney. Royal and ministerial influence combined had recently brought in the former, on the decease of Lord Montagu, son of Earl Beaulieu ; but Powney had not so easily obtained his seat. He successfully undertook, at a period when the king, in consequence of the American



war, was very unpopular, to turn out Admiral Keppel, who then sat in the house of commons for Windsor. Scarcely any individual could be more obnoxious to the king than was that naval officer at the time when the general election took place, in September 1780; though within little more than eighteen months afterwards, he found himself compelled to create Keppel a viscount, and to place him at the head of the admiralty. It is well known, that previous to the dissolution of the parliament in question, George the Third indirectly *canvassed* many of the tradesmen at Windsor, in favour of Powney; and his influence must necessarily have been great in a town where he so much resided. After a sharp contest, Powney only carried the election by sixteen votes, though the freeholders amounted to nearly three hundred. So efficient a proof of loyalty, exhibited at such a juncture, could not fail to make a favourable impression; especially as Powney was again returned for the same borough, at the ensuing dissolution in 1784. The king, on all occasions, treated him with marks of familiarity and regard. His landed property, which lay in the immediate vicinity of Windsor, and was considerable, rendered him likewise an object of royal attention. Neither nature nor education had set their stamp upon him, as a fit companion for princes. His person, short and thick, was ignoble; his manners, unrefined and rustic; his

countenance, destitute of elevation or expression ; and his mind by no means highly cultivated. The distinction shewn him by his sovereign procured him nevertheless a place in the "*Rolliad*," as the esquire of the commander-in-chief, Sir George Howard.

"Erect in person, see yon knight advance,  
With trusty squire, who bears his shield and lance ;  
The Quixote *Howard* ! royal Windsor's pride,  
And Sancho Pança *Powney* by his side."

Since the decease of the Earl of Pomfret in 1785, who was ranger of Windsor Little Park, the king had not filled up that office ; and it was thought that he intended to confer it on one of the princesses, his daughters. But, in the last days of July, Powney was appointed ranger, with a salary of five hundred pounds per annum. His majesty undoubtedly designed it as a mark of his predilection, and as some remuneration for Powney's expences incurred by bringing himself into parliament. The king did not however mean that Powney should consider the post as efficient, or that he should exercise any control over the park ; having previously taken it into his own hands as a farm, for the purpose of agricultural experiments and occupation. Some time subsequent to the appointment, his majesty, accompanied by Colonel Manners, his equerry, on horseback, returning to Windsor, met Powney, whom he accosted, and they rode together till

they arrived at the entrance into the Little Park. Manners holding open the gate, the king entered first; and Powney was about to follow, when the colonel let the gate fall, by which unexpected circumstance, the ranger found himself excluded from the very park placed under his supervision. The king and his equerry passing on, he remained for a minute in silent mortification. Then turning his horse's head, he retraced his steps homeward. Meeting Lord Sandwich, who was master of the buck hounds, Powney communicated the case to him; intimating at the same time, that he should probably ask some explanation from Colonel Manners, for thus shutting the gate in his face. "Powney," replied the earl, "I would advise you to desist from any such intention; first, because Manners, who has killed one or two highwaymen that attempted to rob him, is not a man likely to give you any satisfactory explanation of the matter; but still more, because he probably either had the king's private directions for his conduct, or guessed his pleasure. Let the affair rest." The ranger followed Lord Sandwich's advice, who himself related to me the story.

*August.*—The political power possessed and exercised by Pitt at this time, placed him in a far higher point of security than any minister of the crown had enjoyed, not only since the accession of the Brunswic line, but since the revolution. In fact, if we except the chancellor *in* the cabinet, and

Dundas, out of the cabinet, Pitt composed himself *the administration*. His application to business, his renunciation of pleasure, together with his facility, rapidity, and activity in the conduct of affairs, enabled him to superintend every department. The formation of a sinking fund in 1786, followed in 1787 by the emancipation of Holland from the French influence, rendered him not merely popular, — he was idolized by the nation. At St. James's he could dictate even when he did not persuade or convince. The king feared and respected him. George the Second entertained similar sentiments towards his father. George the Third lamented and disapproved the impeachment of Hastings, to which Pitt had mainly contributed. Even on the recent measure of the "Slave Regulation Bill," his majesty would probably have taken part with his chancellor against the first lord of the treasury, if he could have followed the impulse of his own inclination or judgment. But, on the other hand, the king justly appreciated Pitt's transcendent parliamentary abilities, as well as his services during the long and doubtful struggle with "the coalition." Conscious that whoever presided in the councils of the crown, he must yield to his minister upon many points; so long as Pitt did not interfere with matters of conscience, George the Third felt the warmest disposition to give him unequivocal support.

In the cabinet he exercised almost uncontrolled authority. Bastard, by his repeated attacks on Lord Howe in the house of commons, which ultimately produced that nobleman's resignation, had in fact played into Pitt's hands, who filled up the vacant office by placing in it his own brother. Already the minister meditated to change in like manner the two secretaries of state, and to substitute in their places his most devoted personal adherents. We must indeed candidly admit, that though in December 1783, when the country was in a state of convulsion, two individuals more proper for those high employments could not probably have been found on the moment, than the Marquis of Carmarthen and Lord Sydney; yet in August 1788, functionaries much more capable might replace them. In the upper house they were almost null. Lord Sydney had even ventured to speak, though not to vote, in opposition to the "Slave Regulation Bill." The marquis, his colleague, who presided over the foreign department, rather belonged to the *Shelburne* school, than to that of *Pitt*. He was besides, though not a man of superior talents, yet endowed with a very independent mind: more so than a minister of Pitt's character might like for one of his associates in power. It was, however, necessary to wait for favourable occasions of displacing the two secretaries. Within ten months from the time of which I speak, Lord Sydney was pushed out

of the cabinet ; not, indeed, as the Archbishop of Grenada dismissed Gil Blas, by the shoulders ; but gently,—a bed of repose being previously prepared for him by the chancellor of the exchequer. I mean, the chief justiceship in eyre, south of Trent. Mr. William Grenville was immediately made secretary for the home department. Lord Carmarthen survived his colleague nearly two years. In June 1791, (before which period he had become Duke of Leeds,) he formed the instrument of impelling the court of Berlin to adopt hostile demonstrations against Catherine the Second, during the negotiations relative to Ockzakow. But when it was found necessary to abandon this line of foreign policy, rather than submit to the humiliation, he threw up his employment. Pitt instantly transferred *Lord Grenville* (who had intermediately been created a peer) to the foreign office ; while Dundas succeeded to the vacant secretaryship of state.

Among all the members of administration, the Duke of Richmond manifested the most implicit deference to Pitt's wishes on every point, and seemed to be united with him by the strongest ties. Throughout the whole progress of Sir William Dolben's bill in the house of peers, the duke, like *Abdiel*, "faithful only he," while his colleagues either stood aloof or opposed the measure, defended it with his best exertions. The minister had indeed paid dearly for his grace's

friendship, by adopting his plans of fortification : plans not only very expensive, but adverse to the genius of the nation, if not contrary to the spirit of the British constitution. Like "the Westminster scrutiny," and "the Irish propositions," the attempt had only produced defeat, accompanied with some portion of condemnation. Lord Camden, whom Pitt had created an earl, and made president of the council, was, it is true, sincerely attached to the chancellor of the exchequer. But that great lawyer had already passed the ordinary limits assigned to human life ; and if the brightness of his faculties had suffered no diminution, yet his energies, intellectual as well as corporeal, began to feel the pressure of time. The Marquis of Stafford, who held the privy seal, might be considered as the least efficient of the cabinet ministers ; and he had been throughout a considerable part of his life closely united with Lord Thurlow by habits of convivial and social intimacy.

The chancellor remained, during the recess that followed the prorogation, in a state of sullen alienation. Pepper Arden's recent appointment to the place of master of the rolls, an employment so closely and personally connected with the court of chancery, furnished fresh aliment to his irritated mind. He held Arden in personal aversion, without respecting his legal talents or acquirements. Nor did he fail to oppose every

official impediment and delay that animosity could suggest, to prevent its accomplishment. But, after a long and ineffectual struggle, Pitt's pertinacity prevailed. Thurlow could not however be removed from the councils of the sovereign, like the two secretaries of state. His talents and eloquence were indispensable in the upper house, where he formed the only adequate opponent to Lord Loughborough. *That* necessity, and that alone, prolonged his tenure of the great seal for nearly four years longer; till, in June 1792, Pitt, wearied out with incessant and acrimonious altercations which took place between them, having sent Lord Grenville to fight the ministerial battles in that assembly, and having got complete possession of the cabinet, ventured to dismiss Lord Thurlow. The great seal was then put into commission for a few months, till Wedderburn could be prevailed on to accept it.

The state of depression into which the opposition was fallen as a party, in the summer of 1788, formed a striking contrast with the apparent stability of Pitt's ministerial power. Yet the lapse of a few weeks demonstrated how slippery are the foundations of ambition, and had nearly precipitated the minister from his elevation. Burke, at this period, occupied as he was with the prosecution of Hastings, embarrassed in his private circumstances, sinking in years, and almost hopeless of any amelioration of affairs, had



become acrimonious in his temper, and irritable in his manners. Sheridan, on the contrary, accustomed from early youth to subsist by ingenuity, placed at the head of one of the theatres, fertile in plans for procuring money, and not fastidious in the means that he employed to raise it; convivial in his disposition, universally sought after for the charms of his society, and always extinguishing his cares in *wine*; seemed, like Teuœer, to exclaim, when looking round on his companions in political misfortune,

“ O fortes, pejoraque passi  
Mecum sæpe viri, nunc *vino* pellite curas ! ”

His father, Thomas Sheridan, a man of eminent talents, but whose whole life had been a struggle for bread, finished his protracted career just at this time. Immersed as he was in pecuniary difficulties, he must yet have derived no ordinary pride and gratification at having given birth to a son whose resplendent talents, collectively considered, almost threw into the shade those of every other competitor for fame.

Fox, after contending through five successive sessions against an individual whom his own imprudence had raised to power, and whom every revolving year confirmed in authority; resolved to quit for a time the scene of his own defeat, and of his rival's triumph. He had only taken a hasty view of Italy, when young; a country to which all his recollections, all his partialities, all

his studies, continually re-conducted him. He determined to visit once more the soil which had produced a Dante, an Ariosto, a Guicciardini, and so many illustrious historians, philosophers, or poets. Already, accompanied by Mrs. Armstead, whom he married about five years afterwards, he prepared to set out on his journey; projecting, as he did, to pass the ensuing winter south of the Apennines. His health likewise, which was much broken, prompted him to try the air of a softer climate. Before he left London, he had the gratification of witnessing no ordinary victory over administration, in the return to parliament of his intimate friend, Lord John Townsend, as member for Westminster. Pitt, when he gave his brother a *Mentor* in the person of Lord Hood, no doubt had anticipated the re-election of that gallant veteran. But he found himself greatly deceived in his expectations. After a violent contest, Lord John obtained his seat. The success was celebrated by every proof of party exultation, and the metropolis again exhibited scenes of riot nearly similar to those that disgraced Westminster in 1784. Unfortunately, too, the majority exceeding eight hundred, left no rational hope of restoring Lord Hood by a *scrutiny*. The very name had indeed left behind it recollections which could not be pleasing to the minister. Under these circumstances, it became necessary to wait for the dissolution of parliament before

any new attempt should be made to replace Lord Hood in the house of commons, as representative for the city of Westminster.

His majesty, after passing above a month at Cheltenham, during which time he indulged in a more copious use of the mineral waters than prudence would have dictated, returned with the royal family to Windsor. Previous to his departure, as he had visited Gloucester in July, so he made an excursion, in August, to Worcester. Besides the natural desire to see a place which might rank among the greatest and most opulent cities of his dominions, he was desirous of testifying his regard for the venerable prelate who then occupied the episcopal see:—a prelate whom he would willingly have raised, some years earlier, to the metropolitan dignity of Canterbury. The king, with the queen and princesses, passed a night at the bishop's palace. On the following day he held a sort of levee there; previous to which ceremony, at an early hour, the weather being very fine, he went on foot, alone, to the bridge which extends across the Severn. The mayor, corporation, with many of the nobility and gentry of the surrounding country, afterwards accompanied him to the Guildhall. It is unquestionable that he displayed on the occasion an extraordinary elevation of spirits, attended with some striking peculiarities of deportment. Wine being brought, he drank one or two glasses before dinner, and ap-

peared deeply sensible to the testimonies exhibited of loyal affection. As he became totally alienated in mind within twelve weeks afterwards, there were not wanting persons who imagined that the first symptoms of effervescence produced by the Cheltenham waters on his nervous system might be traced at Worcester. Soon after his return to Windsor, the king celebrated with great splendour the Prince of Wales's birthday. Among the sons and daughters of the crown who assisted at that ceremony, was Prince William Henry, third in order of birth. Having been destined by his father for the naval service, he had proceeded, when very young, to America and the West Indies, as a midshipman, under the superintendence of Admiral Digby. There he soon gave proof, not only of personal courage, but of ardour and capacity. No prince of England since James, Duke of York, (afterwards James the Second,) had been brought up to the sea.

Having completed about this time his twenty-third year, he expressed much impatience to be created a peer, as his elder brother, Frederic, had been on attaining to the age of majority. Independent however of the Duke of York's greater proximity to the throne, his majesty always felt a degree of predilection for his second son. He likewise knew or believed that the Prince of Wales possessed and exercised a great ascendant over the mind of William Henry. These motives,

together with a reluctance to augment the pecuniary pressure of the royal family on the nation, induced the king to reject the importunate solicitations made to him on the subject. Mortified at the denial, and naturally anxious to perform some public part upon the great political theatre of the world, the prince determined, if he could not take his seat among the peers, at least to reach the lower house. With that view, in the anticipation of an approaching dissolution of parliament, he took measures for procuring his return, as one of the members for Totness, in the county of Devon. Probably, such an election, if it ever had taken place, would have been pronounced invalid and null by the house of commons. But the experiment was not made. About nine months after the time of which I speak, in May 1789, George the Third created him Duke of Clarence; observing, as I have been assured, at the moment when he signed the patent, "I well know that it is another vote added to Opposition." I may here remark that though the title of *York* has, ever since the accession of the house of Tudor, been uniformly conferred on the *second* son of the sovereign, yet it was otherwise under the Plantagenets. Edward the Third made his *second* son, Lionel, Duke of *Clarence*; while his *fourth* son, Edmund, received the dukedom of *York*,—not, indeed, from the king his father, but from Richard the Second. Henry the Fourth gave in like manner to Thomas, his

*second* son, the dukedom of *Clarence*. Since the weak, imprudent, unfortunate George, Duke of Clarence, next brother to Edward the Fourth, whom we assume to have been drowned in a butt of Malmsey wine, in 1478, no prince of the blood had been invested with the title. Charles the First, who had three sons, created the third, Henry, Duke of Gloucester, not of Clarence. A circumstance still more singular is, that no such place or county as Clarence exists within the realm of England. I believe, antiquaries agree in asserting that it is from the town of Clare in Suffolk, or from the territory adjoining, the dukedom derives its origin.

*September*.—I set out for Paris early in September, and did not return to England before the ensuing month. Previous to my leaving London, died the Duke of Manchester, after a short but severe indisposition. The Opposition lost in him a steady adherent. His person and manners were most dignified; but neither his abilities nor his fortune corresponded with his figure. On the first day of Hastings's trial, which took place, as we have seen, towards the middle of February, the Duke attended in Westminster Hall. Before he quitted that edifice, he experienced a sensation of a paralytic nature in one of his arms, which he attributed, probably with reason, to the damp, noxious vapour that pervaded the whole building. Having in the course of the summer visited

Brighthelmstone for the benefit of his health, he committed the imprudence of seating himself on the turf, the weather being fine, in order to enjoy the spectacle of a cricket-match, played on *the Steyne*. A violent fever which ensued, carried him off within two or three days.

The short administration of the Archbishop of Sens, from whose supposed talents great expectations were originally entertained, but who only aggravated the national calamities, was already terminated before I reached the French capital, and Necker had resumed his place in the councils of the crown. The effervescence which pervaded the public mind, the deficiency in the revenue, and the contending parties in the cabinet,—all portended some impending convulsion. A free constitution was demanded from every quarter of France. So universal and so violent was this reclamation, that neither Henry the Fourth, nor Louis the Fourteenth could have successfully opposed the will of the nation. But a free constitution might have been conceded to the people, without producing disorganization or revolution. So well cemented was the French monarchy, and so deeply rooted in long prescription was the Capetian dynasty by a lapse of nearly eight hundred years, that no sovereign of ordinary vigour could have been dethroned. Louis the Fifteenth, indolent, dissolute, and feeble as he was, would not have tamely resigned his throat to the knife.

He would have resisted at some point of the contest. But his grandson, with the most benign intentions, allowed insurrection to organize itself, and to proceed, unopposed, through every gradation of enormous crime, till he fell under the stroke of the guillotine.

One of the last exhibitions of royal magnificence which the French court displayed previous to its fall, took place a short time before my arrival at Paris. I mean, the ceremony attending the presentation of Tippoo Sultan's ambassadors to Louis the Sixteenth. Versailles became the scene of this splendid spectacle ; as it had been seventy-four years earlier, of the reception given by Louis the Fourteenth, a short time preceding his decease, to the ambassadors of Siam. Tippoo, one of the most enterprizing, active, and warlike princes who has arisen in the East during the course of the eighteenth century ; though, as we must admit, one of the most imprudent ; the *Mithridates* of our time ; impelled by his inextinguishable enmity to the English name and nation, meditated, (like the King of Pontus in antiquity,) to renew the struggle against his powerful opponents. This object, which was never absent from his mind, induced him to send an embassy to France, charged with presents of the most costly nature. Nor can it be doubted, that if the calamities which soon afterwards swallowed up the French monarchy had not intervened, we should



have witnessed a new contest in the centre of Hindostan, where the armies of Louis the Sixteenth, and those of the Sultan of Mysore, would have acted in concert. The queen, who had not then completed her thirty-third year, decorated on the occasion with the finest diamonds of the crown; herself the most majestic and graceful princess in Europe; was present at the reception of the Asiatic ambassadors. So were the Count de Provence, now Louis the Eighteenth; and his brother, Count d'Artois, with their consorts; accompanied by the heroic Elizabeth of France, sister to the king, who perished, five years later, on the scaffold. Philip, Duke of Orleans, labouring at that time under his sovereign's displeasure, and already engaged in those criminal machinations which burst out within twelve months, absented himself. Tippoo's ambassadors continued at Paris during some weeks, and were treated with distinguished honours: but their master derived little or no benefit from a mission so expensive, which, under more propitious circumstances, might have subsequently changed the face of affairs in Asia.

*1st—15th October.*—While the French capital presented every symptom of approaching commotion, London exhibited at the beginning of October a political calm. His majesty, who appeared to enjoy perfect health, came up weekly from Windsor, and held his levees at St. James's with his accustomed regularity. If in the interior of

his family he ever betrayed any indications of an eccentric or a disordered mind, these ebullitions were so carefully concealed as not to become known beyond the limits of his residence. Such was the tranquil aspect of this country, while the far greater part of the Continent had already become a scene of war and devastation. In the Netherlands, scarcely were the Flemings prevented from rising in open insurrection against Joseph the Second: while that restless and injudicious prince, insensible to the dictates of prudence, pursued his ambitious but ruinous projects of aggrandizement on the Lower Danube. Surrendering his councils to the direction of Potemkin, and of Catherine the Second; intent only on conquests in Servia and Bosnia, anxious to acquire the fortress of Belgrade; directing his armies in person, like Frederic the Second, but wholly destitute of Frederic's military talents,—Joseph had nearly subverted the Austrian monarchy.

At a time when France was menaced with revolution, when the Low Countries hardly acknowledged his supremacy, and Hungary might, from day to day, throw off all subjection; he persisted in prosecuting hostilities against the Turks. Never were the Austrian arms subjected to more humiliating, as well as sanguinary defeats, while contending against the Ottomans, than throughout the campaign of 1788! If the Turkish throne had been then filled by an active, warlike, and

enterprising sultan; by a Mahomet the Second, a Selim the First, or a Solyman the Second; all Hungary and Transylvania must probably have passed again under the Mahometan yoke. Joseph, broken in health, irritated in his temper, and sunk in reputation, at length quitted the camp, and retired to Vienna. As it was said of his ancestor the Emperor Charles the Fifth, when he regained the Spanish shore after his ill-timed and unfortunate expedition against Algiers in 1541, "*qu'il étoit allé enterrer son honneur en Espagne, morte en Afrique;*" so might it with equal truth have been applied to Joseph, that he was gone to bury his honour in Austria, which had expired in Hungary. Happily his reign drew towards its termination.

If that prince became the victim of his Muscovite connexion, his ally, Catherine, succeeded far better in her enterprizes along the shore of the Euxine. Potemkin, by a desperate act of fortunate valour, made himself master of Ockzakow. But previous to its capture, a most formidable opponent had appeared at the other extremity of Europe, who threatened to set limits to the empress's thirst of dominion. Gustavus the Third, to whom I allude, must be ranked, notwithstanding his vices, among the greatest princes who have reigned in Sweden. He possessed courage and talents, military as well as civil, which, if they had been seconded by his subjects and his sol-

diery, might have retrieved, at least in part, the calamities inflicted on the Swedes by Charles the Twelfth's insatiate ambition. After emancipating the royal authority from the state of degradation to which it had been reduced under his two immediate predecessors, Gustavus undertook to carry war to the city of Petersburg itself. Nor would the attempt, however hazardous, have failed, if the empress had not corrupted both his senate and his army, while she induced the Danes to invade Sweden on the side of Gottenburgh. The efforts made by Gustavus under these circumstances excite just admiration. His uncle, "the great Frederic," scarcely exerted energies more conspicuous during the memorable campaign of 1757. The insubordination of Gustavus's forces in Finland, who, when within so short a distance of the Russian capital as to allow the noise of his cannon to be there heard, nevertheless refused to advance, or to draw their swords in his cause, compelled him to return to Stockholm. There, new dangers and difficulties awaited him. The senate, profiting of his absence, had assumed all the functions of government. Count Razamowsky, Catherine's ambassador, dictated his mistress's pleasure to that factious, venal, and unprincipled assembly: but Gustavus, by an eloquent appeal to the burghers, dissipated their machinations.

The Danish auxiliaries of Catherine had

meanwhile advanced almost unopposed to the gates of Gottenburgh. Gustavus, imitating the founder of the house of Vasa, descended, like him, into the mines of Dalecarlia, in order to rouse the rude inhabitants of those subterranean abodes to the defence of their country. Nor were his exertions unsuccessful in awakening their loyalty. They formed a body of three thousand men for his protection. Gustavus's efforts must nevertheless still have proved unavailing to rescue himself and Sweden from foreign enemies, unless he could preserve Gottenburgh. In order to effect it, he was compelled to traverse the central provinces of his kingdom, (precisely as Charles the Twelfth did those of Germany in 1714, on his return from Demotica to Stralsund,) unaccompanied, travelling by night as well as by day, mounted on a common post-horse, liable at any moment to be intercepted by the Danish parties scattered over the open country. Already the governor of Gottenburgh prepared to capitulate, when the king, having eluded all the dangers that menaced him, entered the place.

His unexpected presence, and avowed determination to perish rather than surrender, operated with electric effect on the inhabitants. Yet such was their defenceless state, that if no foreign power speedily interposed, Gottenburgh could not have resisted beyond a few days. Unques-

tionably, under ordinary circumstances, and in other times, France would have come forward as the ally of Gustavus. During successive centuries, the closest political ties had subsisted between the courts of Versailles and of Stockholm. But Louis's domestic embarrassments, which in 1787 had compelled him to remain a passive spectator of the British and Prussian operations in Holland, incapacitated him in 1788 from extending assistance to the Swedish prince. France herself already approached the abyss of revolution. Such was the desperate condition of Gustavus at the commencement of October. Imprisonment, or flight, followed in either case probably by deposition, seemed to constitute his only alternatives.

In this moment of crisis, Hugh Elliot, the British envoy to the Danish court, well apprized of the inclinations of his own cabinet, and sustained by the Prussian minister in Denmark, did not hesitate to pass *the Sound*, and to join Gustavus at Gottenburgh. Since the decease of Sir Thomas Wroughton in the preceding autumn, the English ministers had neglected to send any diplomatic representative to Stockholm. Fortunately, Elliot possessed all the energy, decision, and spirit demanded for the King of Sweden's preservation. "I found Gustavus," said Elliot to me, when relating the fact, "in circumstances so distressing, that notwithstanding his determination to

resist as long as possible, he nevertheless regarded himself as nearly dethroned. He even held a small vessel ready in the harbour of Gottenburgh, on which he intended to embark at the last extremity ; and his resolution was taken to retire to Italy. I said to him, ‘ Sire, prêtez-moi votre couronne, et je vous la rendrai au bout de vingt-quatre heures.’ Gustavus did not hesitate in entrusting the interests of Sweden, as well as his own, to Elliot’s zeal and ability ; who instantly opened a negotiation with Prince Charles of Hesse-Cassel, commander of the Danish forces. The prince royal, (now Frederic the Sixth,) then nearly twenty-one years of age, served under him as a volunteer. Prince Charles of Hesse stood in a very close degree of connexion with the Swedish sovereign, they having both married daughters of Frederic the Fifth, sisters of Christian the Seventh, successive kings of Denmark. But he was not the less ardently engaged in the interests of Catherine, nor less decidedly hostile to Gustavus. It required all the efforts of the British minister, acting in conjunction with the envoy of Prussia, to effect his extrication, and to snatch Gottenburgh from the Danes. A dextrous mixture of expostulation with menace at length accomplished the two objects, and replaced Gustavus on the Swedish throne. Within little more than three years afterwards he perished, like Henry the Fourth of France, in the midst of

his own capital, at a masquerade, by the hand of an assassin.

While I am recounting these facts, in the first days of February 1820, George the Third has descended to the grave. Never, I believe, did any prince—not even Elizabeth—leave behind him a memory more cherished by his subjects! Confined as he was to his apartments at Windsor, unseen except by his medical attendants, having long ceased to live in a moral, and in a political sense; deprived of sight, as well as of intellect; and oppressed under the weight of old age; yet his people have clung to his memory with a sort of superstitious reverence; as if, while he still continued an inhabitant of the earth, his existence suspended or averted national calamities. This affectionate respect he owed far more to his moral qualities, than to his abilities or mental endowments; and his long reign, if considered only as a period of time, abstracted from the consideration of the sovereign, presents a melancholy picture of enormous public debt, immense territorial loss, and most ruinous hostilities. Between 1760 and 1812, when he ceased to *reign*, a period of fifty-two years, we enjoyed scarcely twenty-four of peace. The decease of every other sovereign recorded in history, labouring under incurable mental derangement, has always been considered as a consummation equally happy for the individual and for the community. George the Third is the *seventh* prince whom



Europe has beheld during the last four centuries, seated on a throne, and alienated in mind. Of the seven, *two* have been females, and *three* have reigned in our own days. Germany, France, Spain, Sweden, Denmark, Portugal, and England, have each, in turn, exhibited this painful spectacle.

The *first* in order of time, Wenceslaus of Luxembourg, Emperor of Germany and King of Bohemia, ascended the throne in 1378, before he had well attained to manhood ; and, like Nero, at first gave hopes of many virtues. But they soon became obscured under the most scandalous and vicious excesses. In *him*, insanity was produced by the combination of an understanding naturally feeble, with furious passions and ungovernable appetites, whose indulgence rendered him frantic. Deposed from the imperial throne, repeatedly imprisoned, and degraded to the lowest point of wretchedness, he was nevertheless permitted to retain the title of king, and died in 1419, at Prague.

The *second* instance of royal insanity was presented nearly about the same period, in the person of Charles the Sixth of France ; a prince on whom, with more reason than on Louis the Fifteenth, his subjects bestowed the epithet of “le Bien-aimé.” Endowed by nature with faculties adequate to the weight of government, a constitutional tendency to mental alienation, which

appears to have been inflamed by a *coup de soleil*, terminated ultimately in madness. Under so severe an affliction he laboured during thirty years; not, indeed, constantly deprived of reason: for, like George the Third, he enjoyed intervals of sound understanding; relapsing nevertheless from time to time into total incapacity. Charles terminated his life and reign three years after Wenceslaus, amidst scenes of national distress, and of personal destitution, the most deplorable.

Jane, surnamed “la Folle,” or the Mad, daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella, sister to Catherine of Arragon, Henry the Eighth’s wife; herself the greatest princess in Europe, Queen in her own right of Spain and of the Indies, who forms the *third* example; remained in a state of incurable lunacy during near fifty years. In *her*, it resulted from original weakness of intellect, aggravated by the untimely death of her husband Philip “le Bel;” on whom, notwithstanding his indifference towards her, she doated with undiminished fondness. Immured in the castle of Tordesillas on the Douro, by her son the Emperor Charles the Fifth, from the age of twenty-four to seventy-three; neglected, forgotten, sleeping on straw, which she sometimes wanted, though her apartments were hung with tapestry;—she expired in 1555: an awful monument of human misery, combined with the highest earthly dignities.

Sweden offers the *fourth* instance of a crowned head bereft of reason, in the person of Eric the Fourteenth, eldest son and successor of the great Gustavus Vasa. He probably inherited at his birth the intellectual malady which precipitated him from the throne; his mother having been confined on a similar account. Eric, who was deposed in 1568, after a reign of eight years; whose remaining life was passed in captivity, transferred from one prison to another; and over the precise nature of whose death a veil is drawn, — like those of Richard the Second, of Henry the Sixth, and of Edward the Fifth, in our own annals; — Eric, ferocious, sanguinary, and cruel, as he ultimately became, seems, when not under the dominion of frenzy, to have been mild, tractable, and humane.

We now arrive at the present times. Here, Christian the Seventh, King of Denmark, furnishes the *fifth* exhibition of disordered reason among the sovereigns of Europe. It was neither constitutional nor hereditary in *him*. Excesses, followed by diseases, and the imprudent use of remedies, wholly deprived him of understanding before he had well accomplished his twenty-third year. From 1772 down to 1808, when he ceased to exist, Christian remained the victim of debilities, mental and corporeal, the most humiliating and incurable in their nature. If I do not relate the particulars of his condition, it is not because I

am unacquainted with them, but from motives of delicacy and concern.

Widely different were the causes which deprived of intellect Maria, Queen of Portugal ; a princess endowed with many virtues, animated by the best intentions towards her people, and by no means destitute of qualities or talents worthy a throne. Superstition, combining with a melancholy temperament, overturned her mind. She forms the *sixth* in this list. Dr. Willis, who was principally instrumental in restoring George the Third to health, and who soon afterwards visited Portugal, in the expectation that he might effect a similar recovery in the queen, found her beyond his art. Sir Sydney Smith nevertheless assured me, that soon after she embarked on board his ship in the Tagus, towards the close of 1807, when she was seventy-three years old, she perfectly recovered her reason during about twenty-four hours ; at the end of which time she relapsed into her former disordered state. It is an extraordinary fact, that the two last-mentioned sovereigns should both have been driven out of their respective capitals about the same time : one, by the English ; the other, by the French. Christian was conveyed into Holstein, previous to the siege of Copenhagen. Maria, expelled from Lisbon, crossed the equinoctial line, and found an asylum in the southern hemisphere.

George the Third, who closes this procession of

kings and queens "beheld in dim eclipse," is justly embalmed in the affection of his subjects. Yet his reign may with truth be divided into two portions: the first, comprizing about twenty-two years, from 1760 down to 1782, during which he enjoyed little or no popularity; the last, of seven-and-thirty years, throughout the whole of which period, though the greater part of it was passed in war, his virtues have obtained for him a higher place in our esteem than any prince has occupied since the Norman Conquest. Elizabeth, and William the Third, were sovereigns of much greater talents; so were Henry the Second and Edward the Third: but beneath him, considered in a moral point of view.

I resume the subject of Gustavus the Third. He unquestionably bore a strong resemblance in the formation and features of his character to his maternal uncle, "the great Frederic:" too close a similarity, indeed, on various points. Conversing with Elliot, in March 1791, I asked him his sentiments respecting Gustavus, and his two brothers, the Dukes of Sudermania and of East Gothland. "The king," replied he, "possesses great talents, capacity, and resolution; but his moral principles are most relaxed, and he indulges in scandalous irregularities of conduct. He is besides a comedian, capable of practising every species of artifice or delusion in order to serve his purposes. When his mother, the queen dow-

ager, a princess of very strong mind, lay expiring at Stockholm, in July 1782, he waited on her, embraced her, wept over her, and affected the most acute distress. She was not, however, the dupe of his pretended sorrow. No sooner had he quitted her bedside, than the dying queen called for pen and ink. She then wrote these, or nearly these words, addressed to her brother, Prince Henry of Prussia :—‘ *Les marques d’attendrissement et de douleur que le roi vient de marquer pour ma mort prochaine, ne sont que des grimaces. Il me croit à l’agonie. J’écris ces lignes d’une main mourante, et je les signe de ma main. Louise-Ulrique.*’—Prince Henry retains the note in his possession at this time. The Duke of Sudermania, next brother of Gustavus, has displayed eminent courage, energy, and activity, during the late sanguinary war with Russia, when he commanded the Swedish fleet at the memorable naval action in the Gulf of Finland. I cannot speak in the same terms of Frederic, youngest of the three brothers, Duke of East Gothland. He possesses no capacity ; and during the perilous crisis in 1788, he remained wholly inactive, with his mistress, at Stockholm.” One of Napoleon’s lieutenants now occupies the Swedish throne, to which he has united Norway : while the weak and unfortunate Gustavus the Fourth wanders in exile over Europe.

Elliot himself well merits a place in these me-

moirs, as one of the most eccentric, high-spirited, and distinguished members of the corps diplomatique, during thirty years of my time. His father, Sir Gilbert, placed him in the army at a very early period of life; but as profound peace then prevailed, he quitted the service, and, impelled by a martial disposition, made a campaign in 1773, under Romanzow, against the Turks. On his return, Sir Gilbert's interest procured him the appointment of envoy at Munich; and he was soon afterwards removed in the same capacity to Berlin. There I found him in the autumn of the year 1777. While I was in that capital, the American insurgents, who were then engaged in endeavours to procure the co-operation, not only of France, but of other European powers, sent an agent, named Sayre, to the court of Prussia. Elliot having received information that this man was in possession of the treaty recently signed between America and the ministers of Louis the Sixteenth, determined to obtain it at all hazards. Availing himself of Sayre's absence, who had gone by permission for one night to Potzdam, he caused the bureau to be broken open in which the treaty was deposited. It was instantly copied and transmitted by him to Lord North. The servant who had performed the act, (which, we must own, was not to be justified by the ordinary rules of diplomatic usage,) Elliot immediately mounted on a fine English hunter, and in less

than eight hours he reached the territory of Mecklenburg Strelitz. I have been assured that Lord North received the first authentic proof of the alliance contracted between France and America, not from Lord Stormont, then our ambassador at Paris, but through the copy thus obtained from Sayre's bureau.

That agent, on his return from Potzdam, discovering the violence which had been used, and its object, made loud complaints to the ministers Hertzberg and Finckenstein, who presided in the cabinet of Frederic the Second. He subsequently laid the matter before the king himself, demanding reparation for such an infraction of the laws, as well as for the insult offered to himself in his public character. Frederic, who during "the war of seven years," and even antecedent to its commencement, had considered every mode of obtaining intelligence as justifiable; and who had practised arts, or committed acts, particularly in Saxony, the most contrary to every principle of honour or of morals, for his own protection and defence; affected nevertheless great indignation at the conduct of Elliot. He beheld England engaged in a ruinous contest with her colonies, on the point of being attacked by France, disunited at home, and her councils destitute of vigour; or, at least, of success. Under these circumstances he manifested much displeasure, and was with difficulty restrained from ordering our



envoy to quit the Prussian territories, or reducing him to the necessity of demanding his own recall. Not long afterwards, early in 1778, a French officer, who was then at Berlin, being in company with Elliot, subsequent to the departure of D'Estaing's squadron from Toulon for North America, put various questions to him respecting its supposed destination. The British minister endeavoured by his answers to liberate himself from such importunity; but the other persisting, at length observed to him, "Voilà au moins un fier soufflet que la France vient de donner à l'Angleterre." This insult exceeded Elliot's patience to support. "Et le voilà," replied he, "ce même soufflet que l'Angleterre rend à la France de ma main;" at the same moment applying to the Frenchman's ear a blow as severe as he could inflict. The fact happened as I relate it, but I have forgotten how the affair terminated.

Elliot nourished all the Antigallican antipathies of a thorough home-bred Englishman, though his whole life had been passed on the Continent among foreigners. Being at the "Comédie Française," at Paris, during the representation of "La Bataille d'Ivry," a dramatic piece in which Henry the Fourth, after gaining the victory, with a view to stop the effusion of blood, exclaims, "Epargnez mes sujets! sauvez les Français!" Elliot, who was seated in the "amphithéâtre," rose, and elevating his voice, cried out, "Ne vous mettez pas en

peine! ils se sauveront bien eux-mêmes!" His character fitted him more for the camp than for the cabinet. He married, while at Berlin, a Prussian lady of distinguished family; but it proved a very unhappy connexion, terminating in a duel and a divorce. After passing more than twenty years among the Northern courts, Pitt sent him as envoy to Naples, towards the close of the last century. In 1808, when Bonaparte's power might be said to overshadow the whole Continent, and when the English corps diplomatique was almost expelled from every foreign capital by his overwhelming interference, Elliot accepted the post of governor of the Leeward Islands: less however from choice, than from necessity. "If I had," said he to a friend, "not otium cum dignitate, but, otium with a potatoe, I would not cross the Atlantic." Fortune held however in reserve for him a much longer voyage. The Earl of Buckinghamshire, who had married Elliot's niece, one of Lord Auckland's daughters, and who was then president of the East India Board, conferred on him the government of Madras. Returning from Antigua in 1814, he embarked for Fort St. George; and is now about to revisit his native country, after a career of near fifty years passed in public employments, throughout almost every part of the globe.

*15th—31st October.*—Towards the middle of October, while the king resided at Windsor, his

health first underwent a change, the earliest proof of which was his postponement of the accustomed weekly levee; but no suspicion existed in the public mind of the nature or seat of his malady. On Friday the 24th of the month, he however again repaired to St. James's, and held a levee. That he laboured nevertheless at the time under a degree of mental alienation, became afterwards well ascertained. It would indeed seem as if he was not unconscious of his impending, or actual insanity. Two days earlier, on the 22nd of October, one of his physicians, Sir George Baker, first entertained a suspicion that he was not sane; and various singularities in his deportment were remarked by persons who attended that levee. His dress exhibited still stronger proofs of absence, or oblivion. The chancellor, who was present, having perceived the circumstance to which I allude, requested permission to say a few words to his majesty in the closet. He then informed the king of the fact, who instantly availed himself of the communication. It may be confidently assumed, that he was not of sound mind on that day: but he did not the less give away one, if not two regiments, before he returned to Windsor. General Gordon, a son of the Earl of Aberdeen, one of the grooms of the bedchamber, kissed hands for the seventh regiment of foot. I left London in the last week of October, on my way to Bath, stopping two days with Lord Walsing-

ham at Old Windsor. Vague reports of the king's supposed indisposition pervaded the neighbourhood; and a review, at which he had intended to be present, was in consequence deferred. These rumours, however, excited no alarm. Individuals of the highest condition, residing within a very short distance of Windsor Castle, who were accustomed frequently to see his majesty, to hunt with him, and to be invited to the queen's evening parties, entertained not the most remote apprehension of the seat of the disease. — Yet it subsequently appeared that from the 27th of October he never had possessed his reason; though the disorder did not assume the form of decided insanity before the commencement of November.

*1st—20th November.*—But the subsequent week divulged the fact. On or about the 4th of November, his malady became so serious that its nature could no longer be mistaken. One of the first paroxysms of his disordered intellect took place after dinner, at the Queen's Lodge; where not only her majesty and the princesses were present, but likewise the Prince of Wales and Duke of York. On the 6th of the month, when all the royal physicians were summoned to attend, as well as the ministers and officers of state, the king's condition was explained to them. The gates of the lodge being shut on the same night, and no answers returned to persons, even of the first rank, who called to make enquiries, it was generally

supposed that his majesty had either breathed his last, or lay expiring. Next morning the truth became universally understood; and as the duration of so awful an attack, which suspended all the functions of the executive government, formed an object of the greatest national anxiety, measures were adopted for satisfying the public curiosity. A lord and a groom of the bed-chamber remained in regular waiting at St. James's Palace every day for the purpose. But the greatest object of embarrassment related to the proceedings of parliament; both houses standing prorogued to the 20th of the month, and no power existing in the state which could postpone the meeting beyond that day. Ministers, anxious to procure a numerous attendance, issued circular letters to their friends, stating the necessity of being present on the occasion. So did the heads of opposition. Men of all parties hurried up to the metropolis, in order to witness so new and so interesting a situation of affairs. I returned to London from Bath a day or two previous to the commencement of the session. The capital exhibited a scene of fermentation difficult to conceive or to depicture. Yet was it far exceeded during the last days of January 1793, on Louis the Sixteenth's decapitation.

Two singular circumstances took place early in November, both of them having reference to the 5th of the month. It being the centenary of King William's auspicious landing in England,

the day was celebrated not only in London, but at Edinburgh and at Dublin, with testimonies of extraordinary festivity. Lord Stanhope, one of the most ardent and enthusiastic defenders of civil liberty who has appeared in our time, took the chair at the *London Tavern*, where seven or eight hundred gentlemen assembled, under the denomination of "the Revolutionary Society." On the other hand, "the Whig Club," in which society the Duke of Portland presided during Fox's absence from the kingdom, met at the *Crown and Anchor Tavern*; where Sheridan, in a speech of great power, proposed the erection of a column in Runnemedede, a spot rendered historically sacred by the signature of *Magna Charta*. This proposition, made after dinner, when the company was in a state of exhilaration, met with the most favourable reception. A subscription being immediately commenced, twelve or thirteen hundred pounds were subscribed, and Colonel Fitzpatrick was appointed treasurer of the fund. Many persons nevertheless thought that the choice of the treasurer threw a damp on the patriotic sentiment exhibited:—for, though Fitzpatrick's wit, gallantry, talents, and accomplishments were universally acknowledged, yet his aptitude for the office of receiving and accounting with the subscribers for their deposits did not excite the same conviction. Whatever was the cause, the momentary enthusiasm evaporated, and Runnemedede still re-

mains without any column or monument to commemorate the charter extorted by the barons from one of the most odious and vicious princes who has ever dishonoured the English throne.

The other event was meteorological. We know, by the concurring testimony of many contemporary writers, the sudden and fortunate change that took place in the wind on the *fifth* of November 1688, when the Prince of Orange arrived on board the Dutch fleet, off Torbay : — a change so propitious, that Burnet says, the lines of Claudian were applied to him,

“ O nimium dilecte Deo, cui militat æther,  
Et conjurati veniunt ad classica venti !”

That historian was himself a passenger in the fleet which conducted William to our shores, and has left us the most accurate account of the fact in question. “On the *third* of November,” says he, “we passed between Dover and Calais, and before night came in sight of the Isle of Wight. The next day being the day in which the prince was both born and married, he fancied, if he could land that day, it would look auspicious to the army, and animate the soldiers. But we all, who considered that the day following being *Gunpowder Treason Day*, our landing that day might have a good effect on the minds of the English nation, were better pleased to see that we could land no sooner.” The pilot, miscalculating the force of the wind, which blew very strong at east, found himself, on the morning of the *fifth*, to

the westward of Torbay and Dartmouth. All was consternation throughout the fleet, as they must have proceeded to Plymouth, where their favourable reception was more than doubtful.

“But,” continues Burnet, “on a sudden, to all our wonder, it calmed a little, and then the wind turned into the south; and a soft and happy gale of wind carried in the whole fleet, in four hours’ time; into Torbay. Immediately, as many landed as conveniently could.”—“We had no sooner got thus disengaged from our fleet, than a new and great storm blew from the west; from which, our fleet being covered by the land, could receive no prejudice. But the king’s fleet had got out (of the Thames) as the wind calmed, and, in pursuit of us, was come as far as the Isle of Wight, when this contrary wind turned upon them. They tried what they could to pursue us; but they were so shattered by some days of this storm, that they were forced to go into Portsmouth, and were no more fit for service that year.” We cannot wonder that William should ask of Burnet, as he did, “if I would not now believe predestination?” The singular fact which I have to record is, that precisely the same sudden change of wind happened in 1788, on the same day, and nearly in the same manner, as in 1688. I was at Bristol Wells on the *fifth* of November, having gone there from Bath. The wind had blown fresh at east during two or three days, or in that direction. During the day it fell nearly calm, and at night flew



suddenly round to the westward, with violent rain; blowing strong from that point, where it continued for some time. I believe the circumstance was commemorated, when it took place, by more than one of the daily newspapers or magazines. Though, in consequence of the adoption of the new style in 1752, the Centenary Revolution had been advanced *eleven days*, and therefore was *not* complete in point of *time*; yet the coincidence of such similar facts on the same nominal day, at the termination of a hundred years, excited considerable attention.

*20th—30th November.*—The meeting of the two houses of parliament, during a crisis when the throne might be considered as vacant, being contemplated with the liveliest impatience and anxiety, produced a very numerous attendance on the day fixed for commencing their proceedings. In the house of commons, as soon as the Speaker had taken the chair, Pitt stood up, and having alluded in terms of becoming concern to the awful and afflicting malady with which his majesty was visited; a malady that wholly incapacitated his servants from approaching his person, or receiving his commands; moved an immediate adjournment of a fortnight. The proposition was adopted without a dissentient voice, or the utterance of a single word; each side acquiescing from opposite motives. The friends of the minister only desired to gain time, in order for ascertaining

whether any beneficial change might immediately take place in the king's complaint: while the principal persons in the opposition, deprived of their leader by Fox's absence on the Continent, impatiently anticipated his return. Early in the month of November, as soon as the nature and the seat of his majesty's illness became perfectly ascertained, the Prince of Wales lost not a day in dispatching to Fox information of so interesting an event, urging at the same time his immediate presence in London. As, however, it was altogether uncertain where the intelligence would reach him, or how soon, at that season of the year, he might be able to appear in his place at Westminster; his royal highness found himself necessitated, till his arrival, to consult other advisers. The members of the "coalition" cabinet, with the single exception of Keppel, (who had been long dead,) were, it is true, all of them in existence; and the Duke of Portland might be again replaced at the head of a new administration, as Lord John Cavendish might occupy a second time his former place at the exchequer. But Lord North laboured under the privation of sight, in addition to many infirmities; and though Lord Stormont possessed eminent talents, as well as eloquence, yet he belonged, not to the party of Fox, but to the friends of Lord North. The Earl of Carlisle, who had held the privy seal in 1783, stood in a similar predicament.

Under these circumstances, two individuals assumed the principal temporary influence in the prince's confidential deliberations. The first, Lord Loughborough, unquestionably was one of the most able lawyers, accomplished parliamentary orators, and dextrous courtiers, who flourished under the reign of George the Third. Yet, with the qualities here enumerated, he never approved himself a wise, judicious, or enlightened statesman. His counsels, throughout the whole period of the king's malady, were, if not unconstitutional, at least repugnant to the general sense of parliament, and of the country; violent, imprudent, and injurious to the cause that he espoused. In 1793, when he held the great seal, and sat in cabinet, it was universally believed that the siege of Dunkirk, one of the most fatal measures ever embraced by the allies, originated with Lord Loughborough. Nevertheless, his legal knowledge, experience, and versatile talents, seemed eminently to qualify him for guiding the heir-apparent, at a juncture when, if the king should not speedily recover, constitutional questions of the most novel, difficult, and important nature, must necessarily present themselves.

The second individual who enjoyed the prince's unlimited confidence, was Sheridan. His transcendent powers, so recently displayed in Westminster Hall, combining with the conviviality of his disposition, and partiality to the pleasures of

the table, were well calculated to establish him in his royal highness's favour. His influence, however studiously concealed it might be from the public eye, was not on that account the less real. Erskine, then attorney-general to the prince, and who has since held the great seal for a short period, occupied likewise very deservedly a high place in his esteem, as well as in his affection. The elevation of Erskine's mind, aided by the attainments of his comprehensive intelligence, personal, no less than professional, entitled him indeed to be consulted at such a juncture. But his avocations in the courts of law left him little leisure for personal attendance in Pall Mall; and as he was not a member of the house of commons, whatever service he might perform in the closet, he could render none in parliament.

Pitt's situation at this period demanded not only the firmest mind, but the most unruffled temper, aided by the soundest judgment. He beheld the edifice of his ministerial power, apparently constructed on such firm foundations, menaced with speedy, as well as total subversion. From the first moment that the king's seizure was known to have affected the organs of reason, and consequently that a regency must inevitably take place, unless his entire recovery and resumption of the government should be speedy, his son and successor appears to have determined on an immediate change of administration. Nor did he make

any secret of his intention. Such a resolution, nevertheless, seemed equally contrary to prudence, as it was repugnant to decorum, and adverse to the general wishes of the country. Even if the king had been withdrawn from his people by death, Pitt's dismissal would have been considered by a great majority of the nation as a calamity of no common order. But, without waiting to ascertain whether his father's attack of insanity might prove only temporary, to begin at once by overturning his institutions, and dismissing his ministers; (or, perhaps, more properly to speak, his *minister*; for Pitt constituted, in fact, the administration;) — was an act which excited not merely political, but a degree of moral disapprobation. It will indeed readily be admitted that seven years earlier, in November 1781, after the surrender of Lord Cornwallis at York-town, a different sentiment would have been felt under similar circumstances. A Prince of Wales who should *then* have availed himself of the power of regent to dismiss the unfortunate conductors of the American contest, would have been hailed as a deliverer. But the intermediate lapse of time had completely restored to the sovereign the affection of his subjects: while Pitt, by acts of noble personal renunciation, by financial measures of acknowledged wisdom and public utility, sustained by councils not less judicious than energetic, had attained to a point of popularity scarcely surpassed even by his father between 1759 and 1761.

But Pitt had to contend with secret opponents in his own cabinet, not less formidable than the avowed adherents of the Prince of Wales. The first lord of the treasury and the lord chancellor had long ceased to feel those sentiments of mutual regard or cordiality which two persons occupying such high places in the councils of the sovereign might naturally be supposed to cultivate and to cherish for each other. Their tempers were indeed ill suited to co-operate for a length of time, though necessity and ambition had united them against Fox. Thurlow was sullen, and often intractable: Pitt, imperious, inflexible, and dictatorial. Many causes had combined to widen the breach. The chancellor highly disapproved of Hastings's impeachment, in which Pitt had concurred. His ill-humour was augmented by the obligation officially imposed on him of presiding in Westminster Hall during an interminable trial; compelled to listen for successive hours to Burke's and Fox's invectives, or to Sheridan's heart-rending descriptions of exaggerated, if not imaginary acts of tyranny; while Thurlow seemed ready to exclaim,

*"Semper ego auditor tantum, numquamne respondeam,  
Vexatus toties?"*

The "Slave Regulation Bill," in adopting and forcing which measure through the house of peers Lord Thurlow considered Pitt as having violated ministerial faith with the mercantile part

of the nation, added to the preceding subjects of irritation. Arden's appointment to the office of master of the rolls gave him likewise deep offence. In such a frame of mind, it was natural for him to consider whether, if the king's recovery appeared hopeless, he might not retain the great seal under a regency. He had sate during the ten preceding years in four cabinets politically opposed to each other; namely, with Lord North, with the Marquis of Rockingham, with the Earl of Shelburne, and with Mr. Pitt. Why should he not continue to occupy the same place under a new order of things? The Prince of Wales on all occasions treated him with distinguished consideration; and at the commencement of his majesty's malady, as it became necessary to adopt measures for the preservation of his private property, the chancellor had acted in conjunction with the queen and his royal highness to that effect. So many concurring reasons or motives might incline him either to open a negotiation with Carlton House, or at least to lend a favourable ear to any overtures made from that quarter.

It is nevertheless probable that Lord Thurlow acted towards the prince with great caution, until appearances justified a belief of the incurable nature of the king's disorder. But how little confidence Pitt reposed in him, became evident when the upper house met on the 20th of November. It was not the chancellor who perform-

ed the principal ministerial part on that occasion, or who formed the channel of public business. After the intellectual attack under which his majesty laboured had been announced from the wool-sack, Lord Camden, then president of the council, rose, and concluded a very brief speech by moving (as Pitt had done on the same day in the house of commons) that the peers should adjourn to the 4th of December. His *motion* was received in silence, with unanimous acquiescence. Meanwhile, the king's illness having assumed, towards the last days of November, a character of decided insanity, six physicians had been called in to attend on him. At their head must be placed Warren. He was then in every sense the leader of the medical professors, and he merited the distinction. Possessing great skill in the healing art, he was not less characterized by the pleasing amenity of his manners, and the cheerful tone of his conversation, which prescribed as much to the mind as to the body. Enjoying a most extensive practice, principally among the highest orders of society in the metropolis, he had already acquired an ample fortune. Though his family was numerous, yet his ambition, unlike that of his Esculapian brethren, disdained a baronetage. Having successfully attended Lord North, nearly ten years earlier than the time of which I am now writing, throughout the course of a dangerous illness, that nobleman, then first



minister, offered to recommend him to the king for the dignity in question. "My lord," answered Warren, "I do not aspire to the honour which you have been pleased to tender me: but if your lordship will place my brother on the bench of bishops, I shall consider it as an indelible obligation." The object of his request was conceded; and his brother, after receiving the episcopal mitre of St. David's, was subsequently promoted to the see of Bangor. Dr. Warren's partialities decidedly leaned towards the heir-apparent, and his royal highness was known to regard him with extraordinary predilection, as well as to repose the utmost confidence in his professional opinion.

Dr. Addington, father of the present Viscount Sidmouth, was called in, principally because his medical experience lay much in the particular species of disorder under which his majesty suffered; it not being as yet thought proper to place him in the hands of a practitioner exclusively occupied with the care of lunatics. Sir Lucas Pepys, with whom I have lived in habits of intimate friendship during more than forty years, may not, I am aware, lay claim to the highest place among the eminent physicians of our time. That he is however a man of sound judgment, an elegant scholar, possessing a most classic and cultivated mind, I can attest of my own personal knowledge. If, in his professional capacity, he had any bias, it was not such as

actuated Warren. I shall have occasion, while relating the particulars of his majesty's illness and recovery, again to mention both Warren and Pepys. Each became conspicuous from the different view which he took of the malady, and its probable termination. The calamity, great and appalling in itself, was rendered still more painful by the distance of Windsor from the capital, and the consequent difficulty of procuring constant medical attendance. This circumstance determined ministers to make an effort for bringing the royal patient nearer London. Kew appeared to combine the advantage of good air with proximity. The experiment succeeded. General Harcourt, then a groom of the bedchamber, now Earl Harcourt, and Colonel Robert Greville, equerry in waiting, brother of the Earl of Warwick, accompanied their master in the coach. The Queen, Prince of Wales, and Duke of York soon followed; her majesty remaining at Kew, near the king's person.

From the first moment that the heir-apparent anticipated a regency as almost certain, if not inevitable, he exerted every endeavour to secure the cordial co-operation and support of his brother Frederic. Meditating, as he did, to place Fox at the head of the government, without waiting to ascertain the probable or final result of his father's malady, and aware of the obstacles which the minister might oppose to his intention;

he manifested the utmost anxiety to prevent any discordance of sentiment arising in a quarter so near the throne. It might, on the other hand, have been naturally expected, that a prince whom the king had always treated with marks of great parental affection, if not with decided partiality, would feel a disinclination, or rather a repugnance, to overturn the existing administration. His scruples, if any such he had, were however speedily surmounted. A promise of being placed at the head of the army, with all the appointments, power, and patronage of a commander-in-chief, effectually gained him over to his elder brother's party. I have already spoken elsewhere of the duke. He was at this time strongly attached to a lady of my particular acquaintance, the Countess of Tyrconnel. She was Lord Delaval's youngest daughter; feminine and delicate in her figure, very fair, with a profusion of light hair, in the tresses of which, like the tangles of Neæra's in "Lycidas," his royal highness was detained captive.

Her husband, the Earl of Tyrconnel, might be said to contribute at this time, more than any nobleman about the court, to the recreation of the reigning family: for while his wife formed the object of the homage of one prince of the blood, his sister had long presided in the affections of another. Lady Almeria Carpenter, one of the most beautiful women of her time, but to whom nature had been sparing of intellectual

attractions, reigned at Glocester House. The duchess remained indeed its nominal mistress; but Lady Almeria constituted its ornament and its pride. Lord Tyrconnel himself had been early married to a sister of the Duke of Rutland, from whom he obtained a divorce in less than five years. Not discouraged by so unfortunate a matrimonial outset, he soon ventured a second time on the same perilous experiment; though, as many persons thought, not with better success. His fortune by no means equalling his rank, Lord Delaval extended his paternal care over his daughter and her lord. In Hanover-square during winter, as at Claremont in Surrey during summer, (a country seat which has since obtained a mournful celebrity, from the Princess Charlotte of Wales's death,) the two families formed only one household. The Duke of York was a constant visitor at each place, notwithstanding that Lady Tyrconnel's father and husband were both firmly attached to the administration. Lord Delaval had received his British peerage only two years before, from Pitt; and the Earl of Tyrconnel, who sate in the house of commons for Scarborough, was elected by the Rutland interest member for that borough.

*1st—4th December.*—Fox, so long and so impatiently expected, at length arrived. I believe he reached his lodgings in St. James's-street, contiguous to Brookes's, on the 24th or 25th of

November. He had been nearly five years out of office. The account of his majesty's seizure, accompanied with strong exhortations to accelerate his return, reached him before the middle of November, at Bologna, and he lost not a day in compliance. Accompanied by Mrs. Armstead, he took the road to England, through Lyons; where new and more urgent letters, acquainting him with the king's total loss of reason, induced him to increase his speed. For that purpose, quitting his female travelling companion, he proceeded alone, in a French carriage, to Calais. The construction of this hired vehicle, which was not so well suspended as his own English post-chaise, together with the bad condition and nature of the roads through the interior provinces of France, at an advanced season of the year, sensibly affected his health. His personal appearance in the house of commons on the 4th, when the adjournment ended, excited a great and general sensation. I never saw Fox, either previously or subsequently, exhibit so broken and shattered an aspect. His body seemed to be emaciated, his countenance sallow and sickly, his eyes swollen; while his stockings hung upon his legs, and he rather dragged himself along, than walked up the floor, to take his seat. The attendance, as might be expected, was numerous and tumultuous. Pitt having first presented a *report* of the examination of the royal physicians relative to

his majesty's state, as delivered on oath before the privy council, the document was immediately read at the table. He then moved that it should be taken into consideration four days afterwards, on the 8th of December; to which time he proposed that the assembly, at its rising, should adjourn. While addressing the house, he likewise gave notice of his intention to move for a committee, which might search for precedents applicable to the present calamitous situation of public affairs, and report upon it; adding, that too much caution and deliberation could not be adopted in a crisis of such magnitude.

The first person who rose in reply to the chancellor of the exchequer was Vyner. He had been a member of several parliaments, and in the preceding house of commons represented the city of Lincoln; but after the total defeat of Fox's party in 1784, he lay under a necessity of bringing himself in for the Yorkshire borough of Thirsk. Vyner, who in his person always reminded me of the portraits of "Hudibras," was a Lincolnshire gentleman of large property, endowed with very good common sense, and of an irreproachable character. He descended, I believe, lineally from Sir Robert Vyner, lord mayor of London, of jovial memory; who, as the "Spectator" assures us, followed Charles the Second down stairs, after a city dinner, overtook, and compelled him "to take t'other bottle." Mr. Vyner briefly expressed

his doubts whether the house ought not to examine the physicians at their own bar, before the *report* just read should be made the basis of a parliamentary proceeding. Pitt endeavoured, on the contrary, to shew that the delicacy of the subject, and the dignity of the great person whose health it regarded, might induce them, without any dereliction of their duty, or infringement of their legislative consequence, to rest satisfied with the *report* of the privy council. With this opinion Fox disagreed, inclining to adopt Vyner's sentiment, yet in language of the utmost moderation; and the house immediately adjourned to the subsequent Monday. A scene nearly similar took place on the same evening in the upper house; Lord Camden again performing the prominent ministerial part, while the chancellor remained silent. By the *report* of the physicians, it appeared that Dr. Addington, whose practice had been more among patients afflicted with insanity than any other of the professional attendants on the king, expressed himself in more sanguine terms than his medical brethren respecting the probability of his majesty's eventual recovery. Above fifty members of the privy council were present at Whitehall during the examination; but as at least one third of the number belonged to the opposition, it was judged proper, with a view to prevent disclosures of an unbecoming nature, to determine previously the questions

which should be proposed to the physicians. The precaution formed a salutary check; and immediately after hearing the *report* read, the peers adjourned, as the commons had done, to the 8th of the month.

*4th—8th December.*—Meanwhile, his majesty's distemper, subsequent to his removal from Windsor to Kew, not exhibiting any symptoms of amendment, but rather assuming a more decided character of insanity, it was thought necessary to call in a practitioner who had made the cure of lunatics his sole occupation. Among the individuals whose reputation was well established in that branch of the art, was the Reverend Dr. Francis Willis: for though he no longer performed any clerical functions, yet he united in his person the medical and the ecclesiastical professions. His residence lay in the vicinity of Boston, in the county of Lincoln; and he had attained, if he had not already passed, his seventieth year. Assisted by two sons, he had dedicated himself, during a great portion of his life, to the exclusive care of persons deprived of reason. I have been in his company, not long after his majesty's recovery. He seemed to be exempt from all the infirmities of old age; and his countenance, which was very interesting, blended intelligence with an expression of placid self-possession. When summoned to attend the king, he readily obeyed; but he at the same time



frankly informed her majesty, that if she expected any benefit to accrue from his attendance, he must be allowed to exercise the same authority which he should do over the meanest individual submitted to his control.

A proof which he displayed not long afterwards of skill, or, more properly to speak, of his empire over his patients, excited great amazement, not unmingled with alarm, as well as admiration. The king, who had not undergone the operation of shaving during more than five weeks, nor would submit to have it performed, yet expressed nevertheless a strong desire to shave himself. Willis gratified him in his wish. "Your majesty," said he, "is desirous to get rid of your beard. You shall have a razor given you for the purpose." He instantly put the instrument into the king's hand, who went through the process with perfect success; Willis governing him by the eye throughout the whole performance. From the first day of his arrival at Kew, on the 5th of December, he not only declared that he entertained sanguine hopes of the king's recovery, but confidentially added his expectation of its being effected within the space of *three months*. The experiment of allowing a maniac to shave his beard, when we reflect *who* that maniac was, may appear to partake of temerity; nor could it have been safely tried under a despotic government, where the physician would probably have been

sacrificed if his patient had committed violence on himself. When Dr. Dimsdale inoculated Catherine the Second for the small-pox, that princess,—who, whatever might be the vices of her moral character, possessed a very enlarged and magnanimous mind,—took precautions for securing his personal safety in case of her death. Finding herself much indisposed on a particular day, she sent for Dimsdale, whom she had already remunerated in a manner becoming so great a sovereign. “I experience,” said she, “certain sensations which render me apprehensive for my life. My subjects would, I fear, hold you accountable for any accident that might befall me. I have therefore stationed a yacht in the Gulf of Finland, on board of which you will embark as soon as I am no more ; and whose commander, in consequence of my orders, will convey you out of all danger.” This anecdote, so honourable to the empress, I heard from one of Dimsdale’s sons, above forty years ago.

*8th December.*—As soon as the house of commons met again, Pitt presented himself to the Speaker’s notice ; more however for the purpose of ascertaining the wishes or opinions of the assembly respecting the proper mode of proceeding, under a temporary extinction of the executive power, than with an intention of dictating any specific measure. Fox was not present, being prevented by indisposition. Vyner having a

second time taken on him to open the debate, and calling on Pitt to bring forward some plan adapted to the nature of the emergency ; the latter moved for "a committee to examine the physicians relative to the state of his majesty's health, and to report it to the house." This proposition met with unanimous approbation. Powis gave it as his advice, that the committee should be composed of members from both houses of parliament : but the inconveniences overbalanced the advantages of such an experiment, which, it was apprehended, might embroil the two branches of the legislature ; a calamity greatly to be deprecated at any time, especially when the royal functions were in a state of suspension. Burke pathetically adjured the house not to sacrifice any of their constitutional privileges, and, least of all, the right to examine evidence at their own bar. Notwithstanding this exhortation, the committee was named and chosen. It consisted of twenty-one persons, the chancellor of the exchequer being constituted chairman. Twelve of the number were either ministers, or individuals who commonly supported administration. Among the remaining nine, besides Fox, Burke, and Sheridan, appeared the names of Lord North, Vyner, Powis, and Windham. An adjournment immediately took place. On the same evening, the Marquis of Stafford made a similar motion in the upper house ; and the discussion being resumed

on the following day, a committee, formed on similar principles with that chosen by the house of commons, and composed of the same numbers, was unanimously elected. Neither on the first, nor on the second of these occasions, did the chancellor utter a word, nor even appear to feel any interest in the proceedings. As they did not emanate from *him*, so did they receive from him no support. His silence at such a time, while Lord Camden and Lord Stafford acted, each in turn, as the managers of the house of peers, necessarily attracted observation.

*10th December.* — We now enter on a period, comprizing more than two months, of greater agitation, violence, and mutual animosity, than any other that I have witnessed in my time. The contests in 1782, previous to Lord North's resignation; and those which took place in 1784, between Pitt and the *coalition*; however personally acrimonious, yet regarded only the possession of ministerial power. In 1788, the throne was vacant, though not by the demise of the sovereign; and the question was, *by whom*, as well as *under what restrictions*, the vacancy should be supplied. On the first point, no difference of opinion could possibly exist, the heir-apparent being of full age to administer the government, of sound mind, and present on the spot. But as to the second; namely, what conditions should be imposed upon him by parliament, while the recovery of the

sovereign appeared to be probable, and perhaps not distant ; very opposite sentiments might arise.

Pitt appearing at the bar of the house of commons, presented the *report* of the physicians, which was immediately read. They coincided in opinion as to the probable recovery of their patient ; though relative to the time when it might be expected to take place, they equally professed ignorance. Willis alone, on whose conclusions more reliance was placed than on all the others, assigned the probable *causes* of his majesty's malady, and the probable period of its *duration*. "Weighty business, severe exercise, too great abstemiousness, and little rest, pressing with united force on his constitution, had," Willis said, "produced the attack." — "The irritation," added he, "has in a great measure subsided ; which symptom must precede convalescence. Nine out of ten among those who have been placed under my care, have recovered within three months from their first seizure."

No sooner had the examination of the physicians been communicated to the house, than Pitt moved the appointment of a committee "to discover and report precedents of such proceedings as had taken place, to provide for the exercise of the royal authority, when interrupted by sickness, infaney, or infirmity." Hitherto, whatever hostile sentiments might animate the two parties who opposed each other within those walls,

no indecorous external demonstrations of it had openly appeared. But the moment was now arrived when the most unqualified animosity succeeded to a temporary restraint. It had already been determined in the consultations held at Carlton House, where Lord Loughborough presided as legal guide, and on his authority, that "the Prince of Wales possessed an inherent and indisputable *right* to take on himself the regency under the present circumstances." The time *when* he ought to enter on the possession of this right, and to exercise it, Lord Loughborough however admitted, must rest for decision with the two houses of parliament. Such were the constitutional principles laid down by Wedderburn, on the solidity of which Fox relied. Rising as soon as the chancellor of the exchequer had concluded, he expressed his most animated condemnation of the *motion* just made from the treasury bench. "Why," exclaimed he, "and for what beneficial purpose, are we going to search for precedents? It is a mere loss of time, and pretext for delay. There is here among us an heir-apparent, of full age and capacity to take upon him the royal authority. In my opinion, the Prince of Wales possesses as clear a right to *assume* the reins of government, and to *exercise* the sovereign power during his majesty's incapacity, as he would have in case of a natural demise. He is not, indeed, himself to determine

when he is entitled to exercise it : the two houses of parliament must pronounce on that matter. I conceive, however, that as short an interval as possible should be allowed to elapse before the prince assumes the sovereignty. His royal highness wishes rather to wait the decision of parliament, than to urge his claim. But ought he to wait unnecessarily, while search is made after precedents, when it is perfectly known that none which bear upon the case are in existence? Nevertheless I shall not oppose the *motion*, though it is incumbent on the house to restore without delay the third estate."

Such was the substance of Fox's memorable speech, than which the bitterest enemy of the heir-apparent could not have made any more calculated to injure him. Pitt, who instantly perceived the error committed by the prince's adherents, availed himself of it with the rapidity of lightning. Starting up the instant that his adversary had finished, while his eye flashed defiance, he denied every allegation made relative to the prince's *right*. "The doctrine now advanced," observed he, "forms the most unanswerable reason for appointing the committee. If the claim of *right* now set up had a just foundation, this house would be precluded from any possibility of deliberation on the subject. But I maintain, that from every precedent, and every page of our history, the assertion of such a *right*, either

in the Prince of Wales, or in any other individual, *is little less than treason to the constitution.* Under the actual circumstances, unless by decision of the two remaining branches of the legislature, *the heir-apparent possesses no more strict right to assume the government, than any other subject of the realm.*—"I admit, indeed," continued Pitt, "that it is a *claim* entitled to the most serious consideration. But a new object of deliberation has now presented itself, of greater importance than even the original question. I mean, the question of *our own rights*: for, according to the opinion just laid down, it is become matter of doubt whether this house possesses on the present occasion a deliberative power. Let us therefore ascertain, in the first instance, *our own rights*, since on our future proceedings depend the interests of a sovereign deservedly the idol of his people." Vainly Fox endeavoured, when too late, with great ability and eloquence, to explain away his expressions. As vainly he urged that the two houses could not constitute *a parliament*, and were only *a convention*. With as little success did he retort on his antagonist the charge of meaning to declare the crown *elective*, instead of *hereditary*. Ineffectually did he repeat his assertion, that the prince had an undoubted *claim* to exercise the sovereign authority during his father's present state; and accuse the two houses of arrogating to themselves a power



contrary to the spirit of the constitution, partaking of the crime of treason.

Burke, in energetic language, but intemperate, and full of offensive personalities to Pitt, reiterated Fox's arguments, accused the minister of becoming a competitor with the Prince of Wales for the royal authority, and launched into the most violent invectives. The chancellor of the exchequer was not, however, to be affected by such imputations. He knew his own force, and the enemy's weakness; though he did not the less reply to the charges made against him. "At that period of our history," observed he, "when the constitution was settled on its actual foundation; when, in 1688, Mr. Somers, and other distinguished statesmen, declared that *no person had a right to the crown independent of the consent of the two houses*; would it have been considered as either fair or decent, for any member to have pronounced Mr. Somers a personal competitor of William the Third?" No answer being made to this remark, and Fox, however he might exclaim against the appointment of a committee to search for precedents, not venturing to divide the house upon it; the question passed without any further impediment.

Never was any act more imprudent and ill-advised than Fox's reclamation of the regency for the heir-apparent as his *right*; since it gave the minister ground on which to stand, when he must

otherwise have been driven to the last extremity ! Had Fox indeed possessed a majority of votes in the assembly, he might safely have preferred any claim. But how could he or his party suppose that a minister whose prevailing passion was love of power ; master, as he found himself, of both houses of parliament, and generally popular throughout the country ; would hasten to lay down his employments on the first summons ? If, instead of preferring a claim which he had not the means to enforce, Fox had professed the prince's readiness to *accept* the regency on any terms, under any conditions, and with any limitations or restrictions which parliament might think proper to impose, the minister would have been disarmed. His only efficient weapon, *delay*, would have been broken in his hand. The prince must have been declared regent before the middle of the approaching month of January ; and when once installed in that high office, who could say what events might have followed ? Fox overturned all these speculations in a single instant.

*11th December.*—The proceedings of the peers, at this eventful period of our history, were not less interesting, nor less important, than those of the lower house. When they met on the following day, Lord Camden, after alluding to the *report* of the physicians on the king's malady, which had just been read, moved for a committee

“to inspect, and to report such precedents, as might apply to the actual condition of public affairs;” thus treading in the same traces with the chancellor of the exchequer. Then diverging to Fox’s claim of *right* on the part of the prince to assume the government during his majesty’s incapacity; “If this be common law,” observed Lord Camden, “or analogous to the spirit of the constitution, it is a secret to *me*. I neither entertained such a notion, nor have I ever met with it in any writer, nor heard it laid down by any lawyer. Opinions so new and so extraordinary are more easily promulgated than suppressed, and may involve the whole kingdom in confusion.” Thus challenged and designated, Lord Loughborough came forward, and in a manly manner justified the doctrine, which he avowed to be his own. He did more;—for he arraigned the assertion made in the other house by the minister, in terms of great energy. “I have heard,” said Lord Loughborough, “of a most extraordinary assertion, boldly, arrogantly, and presumptuously advanced elsewhere. It is, that ‘the heir-apparent to the throne, though of full age, has no more *right* to assume the government, while his majesty’s malady incapacitates him from reigning, than any other individual subject.’ If this doctrine is founded in law, the regency must be elective, not hereditary. Alarming beyond measure would be the dangers of such a principle. The two

houses of parliament might then set up a pageant of a regent, while they assumed, themselves, the sovereignty ; because a regent so elected must necessarily be the slave of his electors.”—“ Does not the law describe the Prince of Wales to be one and the same with the king ? Is it not as much high treason to compass the death of the former, as of the latter ? And does that penalty attach to compassing the death of any *other* subject ? ”—We must admit that these arguments were not void of weight, or solidity : but, in order to have sustained them, a majority of peers should have thought and voted with Lord Loughborough.

It now became impossible for the chancellor to remain any longer silent, unless he tamely sacrificed the interests of that sovereign in whose councils he held so high a place, as well as the existence of the cabinet. Yet, his position was one of uncommon difficulty ; he having already commenced a treaty with the Prince of Wales, which promised a most favourable termination. I believe, the first overtures were made, not *by*, but *to* Lord Thurlow, on the part of his royal highness ; promising him to retain the great seal under the approaching regency, provided that he would immediately speak and vote with the heir-apparent. In the critical situation of the king, and alienated as the chancellor had long been from Pitt, such an offer merited mature consideration.

Notwithstanding Willis's assurances, that his majesty's recovery within a short period might be almost confidently expected, the great majority of his subjects inclined to believe and to fear his condition would prove hopeless. Under these impressions, the chancellor quitting the woolsack, delivered a speech, every word of which had been previously well weighed ; and which still left him a free agent either to accept, or to reject, the prince's propositions. Previous, he said, to making any declaration of his opinion on the delicate subject started, he wished to have the advantage of every species of information or precedent which might enlighten his judgment. Respecting Lord Loughborough's *doctrine*, as it applied to the heir-apparent ; with whatever force and authority it might come from a magistrate so eminent, yet to himself it was *new*. Towards the conclusion he delicately panegyrised the Prince of Wales, by praising Lord Loughborough for *not* resting any part of his argument on the private virtues of that illustrious person ; " who," he added, " should always have his applause, when its expression would not be an act of impertinence." Having thus acquitted himself with no ordinary address, he left the debate to take its course. Lord Stormont powerfully reiterated the arguments advanced by Lord Loughborough ; but the house did not the less agree, without any division, to the *motion* made by the president of the council.

12th December.—Fox's assertion or reclamation of the prince's *right* to take upon himself the office of regent; repeated in terms so emphatic and positive, by the chief justice of the common pleas, in his place as a peer;—these two opinions having operated very unfavourably on the public mind, Fox, conscious of the injury that he had done to his own cause, lost no time in endeavouring to efface the impression. As soon as the house of commons met, Pitt gave notice that he would move "to take into consideration the present state of the nation," on the following Tuesday, the 16th of the month. Fox immediately stood up; and, after complaining of the manner in which Lord Camden (whom he described, though he did not name,) had misrepresented his words relative to an august personage, he began by disclaiming any authority whatever for those expressions. "I spoke merely," continued he, "as a private member of parliament, wholly unauthorized either by his royal highness, or by any other person." He next laboured, if not to explain away, at least to give a more limited meaning to his late demand of the regency, as the heir-apparent's *right*. The term "assume," Fox denied to have ever pronounced. With great ingenuity he reasoned on the nature of the prince's title. "Many persons," added he, "admit him to possess an *irresistible claim* to the regency. I agree to that idea; because I

know no difference between an irresistible claim, and an *inherent right*. But, whatever doubts may exist on that point, none can arise as to the propriety of investing him with the sole administration of the government; together with *the unlimited exercise of all the regal functions, powers, and prerogatives, in the same extent as they would have been exercised by his majesty, if he had remained in health.*" Aware, nevertheless, that this demand might not meet with the ministerial concurrence, Fox professed a disposition to accommodate, in order to secure unanimity; deprecated the necessity of being obliged to divide the house; but admitted that if conciliation should not be found practicable, he must, however reluctantly, ascertain on which side lay the force of numbers. Lastly, he expressed his hopes that Pitt would open the nature of the proposition which it was intended to submit to them on the subsequent Tuesday; in order that when regularly made, they might not come to it altogether unprepared for its discussion.

The chancellor of the exchequer, thus pressed to explain his ulterior intentions, did not altogether refuse compliance. Previous however to entering on the demanded disclosure, he informed his antagonist that there was a point at issue between them, which must be decided before they proceeded one step farther: namely, the assertion of the Prince of Wales's *right* to exercise the

royal authority, under the present circumstances of the country. "If that great preliminary question," continued Pitt, "should be determined on constitutional principles, I shall certainly proceed to propose measures for supplying the interruption of the king's authority. And unshaken as my opinion remains, that no part of the regal power can *vest* in the heir-apparent as matter of *right*; I am equally ready to say, that as matter of *discretion* and of *expediency*, it is highly desirable that whatever portion of it shall be exercised, should be conferred on the Prince of Wales. I likewise think that he should exercise it with the free selection of his political servants; and that whatever authority is necessary for carrying on the public business, ought to be conferred. On the other hand, all authority which is *not* necessary, should be withheld; having ever in our view the moment when his majesty may be capable of resuming his prerogatives." Fox, in his reply, charged the chancellor of the exchequer with the intention of setting up, not a regent, but a *parliamentary* regent: while Sheridan warned Pitt of "the danger connected with provoking the Prince of Wales to assert his claim to the regency." These menaces made no impression on a minister who, conscious of possessing the confidence of parliament, as well as that of the nation, pursued his course with a firm step.

I shall here relate an incident which its singu-



larity entitles to notice. During the course of the debate on the 12th of December, James Macpherson, so well known by the "Poems of Ossian," proposed to me to take a hasty dinner at his residence in Fludyer-street, Westminster, and return immediately afterwards to the house of commons. Ever since Pitt came into power, down to that time, he had generally supported administration; but, like many other members of parliament, he now went over to the party of the heir-apparent. During the few minutes that elapsed before dinner appeared, a superb quarto edition of Virgil lying on the table, I amused myself with trying the "Sortes Virgilianæ," on the great public questions which then so strongly agitated every mind. Accordingly I asked of the poet, "Will the Prince of Wales become regent, or not?" Opening the book, my eye fell on these words,

—— "sic regia tecta subibat  
Horridus."

They occur in the seventh book of the "Æneid," where Aventinus, a son of Hercules, one of the auxiliaries of Turnus, enters the palace of Latinus. I thought the passage so descriptive of the indecorous haste which the heir-apparent manifested to assume the royal functions, as to justify me in making a second appeal. I therefore proposed for solution, to the spirit of Maro, "Will the king recover his understanding, or will he be de-

tained in confinement during the remainder of his life?" The line on which my finger lighted occurs in the sixth book of the "*Æneid*," forming a part of Charon's surly address to *Æneas*, on his approaching the banks of the *Styx*.

"Corpora viva nefas Stygia vectare carina."

Applying it to George the Third, we must translate the words, "It is criminal to shut up, as a man permanently deprived of his faculties, a prince who will resume his intellect." Or, "It is criminal to treat as dead, a man who has in him the principle of life." Whether either of these interpretations may appear forced, I won't pretend to assert: but the fact of my having opened on the two passages above cited, on the 12th of December 1788, is most accurately true. I by no means trust to memory, having been so much struck with the incident at the time, that I committed it to paper instantly; and I now have before me the identical memorandum, from which I copy the words. That their application is not equally striking, as it appears in the memorable instance, recorded by Welwood in his *Memoirs*, relative to Charles the First and Lord Falkland at Oxford, when *they* consulted the "*Sortes Virgilianæ*,"—(if we give implicit credit to that story,)—I readily admit. Yet, I think, both the

\* Welwood's *Memoirs*. Fourth Edit. London, 1702. pp. 105—107.

passages on which I stumbled may bear the interpretation here given them, without violence. The truth is, Virgil's divine poem inspires such just admiration, that the gift of prediction has been bestowed on it; as if in it dwelt a prophetic and oracular spirit, capable of resolving all questions.

*15th December.* — No sooner was the house of peers met, than Lord Fitzwilliam rose, in order to deprecate any discussion on the claim of right to the regency which had been made for the Prince of Wales. His friends recognized too late the act of imprudence committed by Fox, and repeated by Lord Loughborough. But Lord Camden replied, that the rights of the two houses of parliament having been questioned, it had become absolutely necessary not to leave undecided, points so important, previous to their adopting any measures respecting a regency. The Duke of York coming forward at this period of the debate, endeavoured, with much earnestness and emotion, to enforce Lord Fitzwilliam's arguments. Speaking in the name of his elder brother, as well as in his own, "The Prince," observed he, "has not preferred any such claim. I am confident that he understands too well the sacred principles which placed the House of Brunswick on the throne of these kingdoms, ever to *assume* or to *exercise* any power, let his *claim* be what it may, not derived from the public will, expressed through their re-

presentatives, and through your lordships, assembled in parliament."

Such a declaration, made from so high a quarter, would unquestionably, in a case of minor importance, have sufficed to stop all further disquisition on the point. But the Prince of Wales's advisers, in their injudicious haste to get possession of power, forgot that they had to contend against a minister who could neither be cajoled nor intimidated. The Earl of Bute, the Duke of Grafton, Lord North, and the Earl of Shelburne, all had successively, when hard pressed by national clamour, or outvoted in parliament, hastened to give in their resignation. Pitt played an opposite game. Popular in his own person; maintaining the cause of a popular sovereign, labouring under an afflicting malady, which might however prove only temporary; and opposing men unpopular, whose acquisition of office, if it should take place, was generally contemplated in the light of a national calamity;—*his* business was to protract the struggle. Possessing a superiority of numbers in both houses of parliament, he could dispute every inch of ground, and throw up new works against the assailants as fast as the old defences were carried. If the predictions of Willis were solid, three months might completely restore the king's mind. In that case, the contest became merely a race against time. Even should his majesty not recover, Pitt could return to a private station, as

he had done in 1783, sustained by the regrets of a great majority among his countrymen.

It was nevertheless evident that his whole superstructure rested on the numbers which he could command and retain, in the houses of lords and commons: a foundation frail in itself, and attacked by powerful opponents. Every successive week that the sovereign remained in his present state, without any visible symptoms of amendment, weakened the minister's control over his adherents. He might, like Fox in 1784, find himself abandoned, and ultimately left in a minority. Already, various peers, as well as commoners, declared their intention to join the prince's party. Many others wavered, and might desert him. Nor was the extent of his influence in either house as yet ascertained, no division having hitherto taken place since the meeting of parliament. In this critical position, any defection in his own cabinet might open a wide breach to the enemy. But Pitt well knew that the chancellor had *closed his bargain* with the heir-apparent, since the house of peers last met on the 11th of December. Every condition demanded was conceded by his royal highness; and Thurlow engaged that in the progress of the approaching debate, he would oppose Lord Camden's proposition. Pitt, however, did *not* then know that the negotiation, after being thus concluded, had been suddenly and unexpectedly overturned. Lord

Loughborough having received intimation of it, instantly repaired to Carlton House, where he clamoured so loudly against the concessions, all which must be made at his expence, that the prince, in order to appease him, reluctantly consented to send Fox to the chancellor, with a message stating his inability to fulfil the stipulated conditions. Fox only made the notification a few hours before the discussion came on in the house of peers; a fact of which the chancellor of the exchequer was ignorant. The house of commons having adjourned over that evening, to Tuesday, the *sixteenth* of December, all curiosity became attracted to the upper house; where the steps of the throne were crowded with members of parliament, anxious to hear the Duke of York:—for it was well known that he intended to take a personal part in the discussion. Among them stood Pitt himself, accompanied by two or three of his intimate friends. The minister came fully prepared for Lord Thurlow's defection, and in expectation of being an ear-witness of his first speech for opposition.

As soon as the Duke of York sate down, the chancellor began by declaring that no individual present could feel a stronger repugnance than himself to the agitation of any question not absolutely demanded by the nature of the subject. Questions of right, he observed, were generally invidious, often unnecessary. When the *report*

from the committee which was occupied in searching for precedents should be made, they would be enabled to judge what steps ought to be taken for restoring vigour to the executive government. "But, above all other duties, we are bound," continued he, "to preserve the rights of the king entire; so that when Divine Providence shall restore his majesty to his people, he may not find himself in a worse situation than he stood previous to his malady, or disabled from exercising all his rightful prerogatives." Adverting next to an observation made by Lord Stormont during the preceding debate, when that nobleman had said that "his emotions on contemplating the affliction under which the sovereign laboured, were rendered more acute by his recollection of the marks of kindness that he had been accustomed to receive from his majesty;" "My own sorrow," pursued the chancellor, "is aggravated by the same circumstance. My debt of gratitude likewise to him is ample, for the numerous favours which he has graciously conferred on me; *which, whenever I forget, may God forget me!*" Pitt, who was standing at only a few paces distant from him when he pronounced these words; well knowing the treaty into which Lord Thurlow had entered with Carlton House;—no longer master of his indignation, he turned round to General Manners, and to the other friends close to him, and in a low voice exclaimed, "Oh! the

rascal!" General Manners himself assured me of this fact; adding, "I was so astonished at it, and so unable to account for it, that when walking out with Pitt, some weeks afterwards, I asked him the reason of his exclamation. He related to me the particulars of the chancellor's conduct, together with the cause that finally produced the rupture of the negotiation." It is impossible to call in doubt the truth of the testimony here produced; Manners, who is alive at the present hour, (in March 1820,) being a man of strict honour and veracity, my intimate friend of forty years; above all suspicion of inventing such a story; and as devoid of any enmity towards Lord Thurlow, or towards his memory, as I am myself.

The debate continuing after the chancellor had finished, became angry, personal, and tumultuous. Lord Stormont having charged the president of the council with bringing into discussion a subject of the most delicate nature in a disorderly and unparliamentary manner, that nobleman vindicated himself from the imputation. "I did not," observed he, "first broach this doctrine of the Prince of Wales's *right* to the regency. But, having been asserted, it must be noticed, because we are engaged in a proceeding which will materially affect the liberties of posterity." As the Duke of York had risen to address the assembly early in the evening, so the Duke of Gloucester spoke towards its close. In language and in manner the



most earnest, he deprecated any further conversation on a question calculated, as he asserted, to produce the greatest calamities. The Duke of Cumberland, though wholly devoted to his nephew, yet, conscious of his own inability to mix in debate, remained silent.

Pitt, however indignant at the chancellor's conduct, yet knew too well the value of Thurlow's talents and support, under circumstances so critical, not to suppress his resentment. They continued to sit in cabinet, and to act together, if not cordially, yet in apparent union, throughout the whole future progress of the king's malady. But Lord Thurlow's meditated tergiversation did not remain a secret. Political prints, exposed at the time in the shops of the metropolis, represented him stripping off his coat, and turning it inside out; accompanying the act with an appropriate observation, that "one side would do as well as the other." Dundas, on the contrary, who well knew that for *him* no asylum would be found at Carlton House, and that his only hopes of office, or views of ambition, must centre in Pitt, never once swerved from his friend the minister throughout the whole protracted struggle.

16th December. — Hitherto no division had taken place in either house of parliament; but such an appeal could not be much longer delayed, each party being anxious to ascertain their respective strength. It was, however, obvious that if

some signs of convalescence did not manifest themselves in the king's malady, the ministerial numbers would insensibly, perhaps rapidly, diminish : while the adherents of the heir-apparent would receive continual accessions. No sooner did the house of commons meet, than the chancellor of the exchequer opened his proposition for supplying the deficiency in the legislature. During the whole time that I was a member of that assembly, I never had greater occasion to admire the prodigious powers of his calm, collected, and capacious mind, than on the evening in question. Nor did Fox, though labouring under severe and obvious indisposition, display abilities less splendid. Throughout a debate of at least nine hours, they, and they only, contended for superiority. All the other members might almost be regarded as auditors, though some of them occasionally took part in the discussion. Pitt, while he developed his intentions, and proposed his *resolutions* for restoring the suspended functions of the royal authority, did not the less adhere to his former declaration, that the question so injudiciously agitated by Fox, of the Prince of Wales's *right* to assume the regency, must be decided before any other topic.

“ I readily acknowledge,” continued he, “ the most eminent qualities in the present heir-apparent. But it has been asserted within these walls, that he possesses, at this moment, a title as

indisputable to exercise the sovereign authority; as he would have had by the natural demise of the king; because the present suspension is *a civil death*. Can we then consider his majesty's indisposition, which is not an uncommon case, and in general only temporary, as *a civil death*? I am persuaded that we shall not."—"The lofty terms in which that claim of *right* was originally made, have, I admit, been since somewhat lowered. It has likewise been declared in another assembly, that no intention exists of enforcing that right: but words form no parliamentary ground of proceeding, and cannot afford a guarantee that, at some future period of our history, such attempts may not be resumed or asserted."

Powerful, eloquent, and admirably adapted to the occasion, as was the minister's speech, Fox's reply did not fall short of it in any of these particulars. I cannot indeed too strongly repeat, that in mental endowments of every kind, Fox equalled, perhaps exceeded his antagonist. It was Pitt's superior judgment and correct life which principally turned in his favour the scale; which retained him in office throughout almost his whole career, while the want of those qualities excluded Fox *from* office. The former had, moreover, only one predominant passion: love of power, and the fame as well as advantages connected with it. Fox, as I have elsewhere observed, found room in his bosom for many pursuits be-

sides ambition and thirst of glory. History and poetry each attracted, soothed, and delighted him. Pitt was always a minister, or aspiring and meditating to become a minister. Nature had intended him for the cabinet, and for no other situation. Fox, at his retreat on St. Anne's Hill, could derive amusement from his garden, from his library, from conversation, in a variety of domestic or of literary avocations. But Pitt, when compelled, from 1801 to 1804, to reside during many months of each year in solitary grandeur with Lady Hester Stanhope, at Walmer Castle, listening to the waves of the German Ocean; while Addington, whom he had raised from comparative obscurity to the highest offices, filled his vacant seat;—Pitt only supported life by the anticipation of his speedy return to power. On that object, and on that object alone, was his mind constantly fixed. During his exile from Downing-street to the Kentish shore, a period of nearly three years, he underwent all the torments of mortified ambition. I saw him frequently at that time, and his countenance always seemed to say,

“Existence may be borne, and the deep root  
Of life and sufferance make its firm abode  
In bare and desolated bosoms.”

His wishes were gratified. He resumed his office, and died within twenty months afterwards, the victim of his own accomplished desires. His *star* produced him under the reign of George the *Third*.

If he had flourished under George the *Fourth*, he would probably have remained during the greater part of his life on the opposition bench, while Fox would have been minister. Throughout the whole contest, he was not less indebted to Fox's errors, than to his own transcendent dexterity, for the triumph that he obtained. If Fox had displayed at that time as much ability in *getting* possession of power, as Pitt exhibited in *keeping* possession of it, the latter never could have held out till the king's recovery.

In the course of his speech, Pitt had gone largely into precedents analogous to the actual condition of the country, drawn from the Plantagenet times, but, particularly from the calamitous reign of Henry the Sixth, when it had become necessary to elect a regent,—or rather, a protector. Fox well observed, that precedents extracted from such periods of our history,—or, indeed, from any periods antecedent to *the revolution*,—were altogether irrelevant and inapplicable; because, at no æra previous to 1688, “was civil liberty clearly defined and understood, all the rights of the different branches of our legislature ascertained, and the free spirit of the British constitution practically acknowledged.” Then advertng to the great subject of actual dispute, “On the present occasion,” observed he, “two opposite assertions have been made in this house relative to the Prince of Wales's *right* to exercise the sovereign

authority during its actual suspension. I deprecate any decision on so delicate a point; but since the minister seems determined to render it a personal question, and to have recourse to his majority, let the motion be, 'That we are of opinion, the Prince of Wales, being of full age and capacity, has no more right to exercise the royal authority during his majesty's incapacity than any other subject.' He knows that he dares not risk it. Notwithstanding his high character, and his influence within these walls, he would not be supported by twenty members."—"The claim itself," continued Fox, "has been disavowed in another assembly, by an exalted personage, in his brother's name; so that truly to describe the case, the preamble of the *bill* must run thus: 'Whereas the Prince of Wales has never claimed *any* right to the regency, it becomes necessary for the peers and commons of England to declare that he has *no* right; and we therefore declare his royal highness sole regent of these kingdoms.'

After exhausting every argument suggested by reason, or furnished by history, to sustain his cause, Fox concluded with addressing to his rival the keenest personal animadversions. "He appears," said Fox, "to have been so long in the possession of power, that he cannot endure to part with it from his grasp. Finding the whole authority entrusted by the constitution to the sove-

reign not too much for carrying on the government with vigour, he is determined to cripple his successors. What his motives can be for adopting such a line of conduct, I am ignorant; but if in this assembly there exists an ambitious individual who designs to throw the empire into confusion, he would pursue the path traced out by the minister." Pitt was not of a temper to support such sarcasms without reply. He retorted them on his adversary in language of equal asperity; denominating his attack "unfounded, arrogant, and presumptuous. I am charged," continued he, "with acting from a mischievous spirit of ambition, unable to support the idea of relinquishing power, and therefore disposed to envy or obstruct the credit of my successors. This house and the country will determine what have been my motives throughout the whole of the present unfortunate crisis." Fox having declared it to be the prince's determination to call himself and his friends to power, "It has been announced to-day," observed Pitt, "that the chiefs of opposition are to be the successors of the present administration. I know not on what authority this declaration is made; but we are obliged to him for the warning. Their principles are already well understood, and they furnish an irresistible reason for us deliberately to consider, what portion of the royal prerogatives should be entrusted to them during the present temporary

incapacity of the sovereign." From the beginning down to the termination of the king's malady, Fox and Pitt always beheld it through opposite mediums; the former regarding it as incurable and permanent; the latter affecting to consider it as a mere attack of disease, neither uncommon nor alarming, however afflicting, and which would almost certainly yield to medical skill.

I observed, that on the night of the 16th of December these two extraordinary individuals seemed by common consent to take the debate exclusively into their own hands. Yet among those members who actively participated in the discussion, there was one whose eloquence formerly melted and animated, as his wit delighted, his hearers. I allude to Lord North, who, after having scarcely been seen within the walls of the house during the two last sessions, was now led down, blind and infirm, to express his perfect coincidence in all Fox's opinions. Seated near his former colleague, he rose at an early hour of the evening, and delivered himself with his accustomed ability; though without a ray of that humour which used to illuminate his most ordinary efforts. The time and the subject, it is true, did not favour such effusions; but as Sir Thomas More jested on the scaffold, so Lord North knew how to temper with gaiety the gravest topics. Pitt finally moved three *resolutions*: the *first*, only



declaring that "the king was unable to attend to public business;" but the *second*, maintaining it "to be the *right* and *duty* of the two houses to provide the means of supplying the defect of the royal authority." The *third* and *last resolution*, which was the most important, asserted it to be "necessary that the peers and commons of Great Britain now assembled should determine on the means by which the royal assent might be given, in the name and on the behalf of the king, to such bill as might be passed by the two houses." Lord North having moved that "the chairman leave the chair," a division took place at a very late hour, when only 204 members supported the *motion*, while it was negatived by 268. I made one of the 64 majority who voted with administration. It formed the first trial of numerical strength between the two contending parties. Lord North's infirmities did not permit him to witness the conclusion of the debate.

19th December.—Fox being likewise incapacitated by severe indisposition from attending in his place when the house met again; as soon as Colonel Fitzpatrick stated the fact, Pitt immediately consented to an adjournment till the following day. On that evening a long and desultory discussion arose relative to the *second resolution*, moved by the chancellor of the exchequer. Sir Grey Cooper, in a speech full of historical analogies or precedents applicable to the actual position

of the country, laboured to prove that the Prince of Wales had, if not a *right* to assume the regency, yet such unquestionable *pretensions* to it as could not be rejected without alledging causes which would exclude him from the crown. Martin, a man whose recognized rectitude and independence of character gave weight to his observations even when they were trite, coarse, or offensive, did not hesitate to compare the notification, made by Fox of the prince's intention to call new individuals to his councils, with Falstaff's anticipation of the offices which he and his associates hoped to fill under Henry the Fifth after he should ascend the throne. Pitt's high character and correct deportment protected him from similar attacks. Fox disdained to notice Martin's allusion; but Windham repelled it equally with the weapons of ridicule and of reason. Powis and Marsham both came forward, as did Dempster, with propositions or *motions* calculated to prevent the two contending heads of party from proceeding to extremities. Their efforts at producing conciliation proved wholly ineffectual, and the house at length adjourned, after voting the *second resolution* without a division.

It was against the *third* and *last* of these three *resolutions* that the adherents of the heir-apparent levelled the accumulated strength of their faculties; well knowing it to be the citadel of the minister, within which he meditated to capitulate on

terms. They wished to force him to surrender without previously making conditions. In order to effect it, they moved "to address the prince to take on him the administration during his majesty's indisposition." By such a mode of proceeding, analogous to the conduct of the two houses towards the Prince of Orange in 1689, they truly observed that "there would be a *third estate*; and the royal power would devolve on, or become vested in the individual who, from every motive, must be most deeply concerned in the preservation of the monarchy." These were Fox's own expressions. When that preliminary step was taken, *then, and not till then*, as they maintained, was the proper moment arrived in which the two houses should present to the newly-elected regent the *conditions*, or *limitations*, on which his authority was confided to him. Of his acquiescence in those restrictions, there could not arise, they said, the slightest doubt.

Unquestionably, such would have been the most natural, simple, obvious, constitutional line of parliamentary conduct. But it did not suit the views of the minister; nor perhaps would it be, he wisely thought, the safest measure for securing the king's resumption of his power, whenever he might recover the use of his faculties. Pitt preferred to treat with the *Prince of Wales* previous, and not subsequent, to his being declared *regent*. "Who," observed Pitt, "can answer for his not

using the royal negative when the limitations are presented to him for his assent?" It was therefore determined in the cabinet to create or erect *a third estate*, by empowering the chancellor to put the great seal to such *bills* as the two houses should pass; thus giving to them the form and force of law. Pitt, no doubt, would have wished that a man more accommodating than Lord Thurlow, as well as one on whose adherence he could more securely rely, had held the great seal: but the chancellor's talents rendered him necessary; and the minister might say with the Duke of Venice,

"Men do their broken weapons rather use  
Than their bare hands."

*22nd December.*—As soon as the house of commons met, Burke attacked the ministerial proposition with that impetuous, classic, splendid eloquence which frequently disdained the restraints of moderation, of reason, and almost of decorum. "As little acquainted with the interior of Carlton House as of Buckingham House, I profess," said he, "only to deliver my sentiments in a manner becoming a simple citizen. The great seal, it appears, is to be affixed to a commission, robbing the executive power of its due function. A composition of wax and copper is to represent the sovereign. So preposterous a *fiction* merits only contempt and ridicule. I disclaim all allegiance, I renounce all obedience to a king so formed. I worship the gods of our glorious con-

stitution, but I will not bow down before Priapus!" Against the chancellor, Burke inveighed in the most personal terms. "I approve not," exclaimed he, "of robbery, house-breaking, or any other felony. Yet is each of these crimes less inexcusable than law forgery. If the unfortunate monarch whom we all lament could know the proposition now agitated, he would no doubt cry out with Macbeth,

'Upon my head they placed a fruitless crown,  
And put a barren sceptre in my gripe,  
Thence to be wrench'd with an unlineal hand,  
No son of mine succeeding.'

'Restore me,' he would add, 'to my former state. Let me not behold a *black-browed phantom* seated on my throne!" Scott, the solicitor-general, opposed to these shafts of oratorical declamation the arms of legal metaphysics; endeavouring, not without success, to demonstrate that the *fiction* of which Burke complained, and which he so loudly reprobated, was dictated and justified by necessity. Fox, who well knew how to appreciate talents, and who respected Scott's abilities, which were of another order from those of Arden and of Macdonald, replied to him; putting out all the energies of his mind against an adversary so worthy of his exertions. With prodigious force of language, he placed in the strongest point of view the absurdity of making the two houses *legislate*, which act they were incapable of performing without the king.

“It is however asserted,” continued Fox, “in order to justify this monstrous act of usurpation, that though the king is incapable, yet the throne is full. Admitting such a solecism, what is the substitute which it is proposed to adopt? To appoint a person who is to give the royal assent to bills passed by the two houses. How is he to ascertain that assent? Is he to repair to Kew for the purpose? Human reason revolts at the supposition. Can he exercise his own discretion? No. To whom then can he apply? To the two houses of parliament who created him. And thus shall we have a monster unknown in English history.”

Pitt answered these objections with corresponding ingenuity, if not with solidity. In reply to his adversary’s denial that the two houses could in any case *legislate* without the co-operation and consent of the crown, he adduced the *revolution* of 1688 itself. “The two remaining branches of the legislature,” observed he, “*did what amounted to a legislative act* in that crisis of the country. They *resolved* to settle the crown, not on the Prince of Orange, nor on the Princess his consort, but on both *jointly*; the royal authority to be exercised only by *him*. Here it is evident that whatever the necessity of the case required, the lords and commons *then* did. So will they do *now*.”

In answer to Burke’s and Fox’s reproaches respecting the *fiction* of empowering the great

seal to give the royal assent to bills, "It is this *fiction*," said Pitt, "which has been so much traduced and ridiculed, that governs our judicial proceedings in all the courts of law, and protects our dearest rights, as well as property. It is the principle which assumes the political capacity of the king to be always entire. Certain legal forms are evidence of his will. Such is the act of affixing the great seal. The highest authority *in* the nation, is the great council *of* the nation; and if they think proper to signify the will of the sovereign, *there is no legal fiction*." Pitt concluded by applying these principles and facts to the actual state of the country; particularly as to the point of binding the Prince of Wales under certain conditions *before* the regency should be offered him. "When powers are once conferred," observed he, "who can say how they may be exercised? The regent may fill the other house with new peers, while we are actually deliberating whether that power shall, or shall not, be limited. The powers ought to be discussed while we possess the faculty of deliberation." How far the minister veiled his own ambition under the mantle of loyalty, and of zeal for the constitution, in adopting these maxims of conduct, may excite doubt: but we must admit their consummate prudence and policy, in whatever principle they originated. At the close of the debate, Pitt was supported by a still larger majority than on the

former discussion. Four hundred and twenty-nine members voted, of whom 251 followed him, while only 178 accompanied Fox into the lobby.

26th December. —After two such triumphant divisions within the space of a few days, it still remained to ascertain whether ministers would meet with a similar degree of support in the other house, where it was well known that they would be opposed by three princes of the blood. That assembly proceeding with more deliberate steps than the commons, did not come to the discussion of the regency till towards the last days of December. Lord Rawdon having moved “to address the Prince of Wales, to take on him the executive government as sole regent,” Earl Camden replied, that however deeply he regretted the agitation of the question of *right*, nevertheless, as the doctrine had been once asserted, men’s minds must be set at rest respecting the point. But the most interesting circumstance of that evening’s debate, was the personal attendance of the Marquis of Lansdown. Since his resignation in 1783, he rarely quitted his palace in Berkeley-square, or his retreat at Bow Wood, to attend his duty as a peer ; and when he rose to speak, few persons knew into which scale he intended to throw his weight. With Pitt he maintained no political connexion ; nor could he indeed contemplate that minister as other than an intruder, who, availing himself of favourable circumstances, had



vaulted into his vacant office. The *marquisate* which had been subsequently conferred on him might gratify his pride, or console his vanity, but could make no compensation to his mortified ambition. Yet, on the other hand, if Pitt was a rival, Fox was an enemy. He, as well as Sheridan and Burke, had levelled the most severe reflections on Lord Shelburne's private and public character while at the head of the treasury. The spirit of party might nevertheless supersede all recollection of these injuries, and the moment was propitious for sacrificing antient enmities to objects of personal interest, or of national consideration.

In truth, the Marquis of Lansdown was not less eminently qualified for the minister of a great country than were either Pitt or Fox. Under many points of view, he was superior to the former: in some, he excelled the latter. Far more affable, easy of access, and pleasing in his manners than Pitt, he surpassed even Fox in accurate knowledge of the European courts, and their policy or interests. In application to business, facility of comprehension, and aptitude for affairs, he yielded to neither. George the Third considered him with much partiality, while he entertained no such personal attachment towards Pitt as he had felt for Lord Bute and for Lord North; and he nourished a dislike allied to aversion for Fox. Thus gifted by nature, ambitious, eloquent, highly

informed, how happened it, we may naturally ask, that he only held his power for eight months, and never could regain it? The answer is obvious. Lord Lansdown laboured under various disqualifications, of which not the least heavy was the peerage. All our most eminent ministers since the reign of Queen Anne were members of the lower house. Walpole, Pelham, North, the first and the second Mr. Pitt, remained commoners during the whole time that they presided in or directed the councils of the crown. If the present Earl of Chatham had died between 1784 and 1801, his decease, by transferring his brother from the treasury bench to a seat among peers and bishops, would have half extinguished him, notwithstanding all his talents. Pitt required the tumult, and the effervescence, and the animation of a popular assembly, to sustain his eloquence. *They* required his presence to confirm their adherence, and to justify their votes. Nor would Fox have suffered a less deep political eclipse during the same period of time, if death had carried off his nephew Lord Holland. At the present hour, in 1820, though Lord Liverpool occupies the head of the treasury, Lord Castlereagh manages the lower house, and may be regarded as the efficient minister. Fox performed the same part in 1782, under the Marquis of Rockingham; in 1783, under the Duke of Portland; and even in 1806, under Lord Grenville.

Such is the spirit and genius of the British constitution, which is essentially democratic, though tempered by monarchical and aristocratic institutions.

Lord Lansdown's second defect proceeded from the want of that quality denominated in pugilistic language *bottom*; in other words, firmness. If he had possessed it in 1783, as Pitt exhibited it in 1784, he might have maintained himself in office, notwithstanding the vote of censure carried by a small majority in the lower house against the recently concluded peace. Even Lord North displayed far more firmness than the Earl of Shelburne. During the three last years of his administration, from 1779 to 1782, he was many times left in a minority on questions of vital importance. Yet he did not resign; and he was ultimately swallowed up in the overwhelming calamities of the American war. Addington wanted almost every constituent quality of a great, an accomplished, or an able statesman. He was extinguished in May 1804; or rather, he disappeared in an instant, without any adequate apparent cause, except Pitt's impatience to re-occupy his former situation. It may indeed justly excite wonder that Addington should have remained above three years first minister of this country, during at least one half of which period we were contending for our existence against Napoleon. In no endowment of mind did he excel. His

eloquence was cold and spiritless, while of Continental affairs he was supremely ignorant. Even in finance, he exhibited no resources. The last and greatest defect in Lord Lansdown's intellectual composition was his reputed insincerity: a vice which, more than any other, brought Charles the First to the block.

The sentiments expressed by the marquis on that evening would have done honour to any minister of any age. "I wish, my lords," said he, "that the members of administration had come down at once with such a commission as the third *resolution* points out; and that, instead of now discussing the propriety of putting to it the great seal, it had been acted upon in the first instance. What impediment prevents the officers of the crown from issuing such a commission? They ought not to be deterred by hard words, denominating the act a *fiction*."—"The principles laid down at the revolution make the crown to be, not *descendible property*, like a pigstye or a laystall, but a *descendible trust*, for millions and ages yet unborn. I contend therefore, that *the hereditary succession cannot be considered as a right. It is a mere political expedient, capable of being altered by the two houses.* In cases of exigence, they have always been termed *the legislature*, in order to prevent the greatest of all possible evils, a *disputed succession*. This reasoning obviously applies with augmented force to the case of a

regent." Could Lord Somers, or Algernon Sydney himself, devoted as he was to a republic, have more admirably defined our constitution ?

There were other passages in Lord Lansdown's speech of great beauty and sublimity. "The people, my lords," said the marquis, "have rights. Kings and princes have none. The people want neither charters nor precedents to prove their rights; for they are born with every man in every country, and exist in all countries alike, though in some they may have been lost. — I wish, therefore, that the question of *right* to exercise the royal authority, which has been claimed and asserted, may be decided; in order that those who suffer oppression under governments the most despotic may be taught their rights as men. They will then learn that though their rights are not, like ours, secured by precedents and charters, yet, as soon as they assert their rights, they must be acknowledged." Neither Hampden nor Locke could have reclaimed for their countrymen, and for mankind, the blessing of civil liberty, as their birthright, in language of greater energy, than do these expressions of Lord Lansdown. His mention of the Prince of Wales, and the encomiums that accompanied it, were, however, regarded as susceptible of a more doubtful interpretation. "Let us suppose," continued the marquis, "that the present heir-apparent, instead of residing at Windsor, and exhibiting a model of affection

towards the sovereign ; instead of doing the honours of the country to foreigners, and raising the national character for polished manners ; had been caballing away his time in the capital. Let us suppose that he had been intriguing with the army and the navy, cultivating his interests with foreign courts, or *raising money to carry on his ambitious projects* ; thus attempting to enforce his claim, and to maintain his right, by undue means. Would not every man in the kingdom wish, if such had been the conduct of the prince, that the two houses of parliament should interpose, to exclude him from exercising the powers of regent, and appoint another to fill that office ?”

The chancellor strongly supported Lord Lansdown’s arguments, while he bestowed eulogiums on the prince, which were thought to be more sincere than those of the marquis. In reply to Lord Loughborough’s assertions of the right which his royal highness possessed to exercise the regency, Thurlow demanded, “What means the term of regent ? Where is it defined ? In what law book, or in what statute ? I have heard of protectors, guardians, and lords justices ; but I know not where to look for the office and functions of a regent. To what end then address the prince to take on him a power the limits of which are not ascertained ?”—“No man entertains a higher respect than myself,” continued he, “for that illustrious person. I wish as ardently

the advancement of his honour and interest, as those who affect more attachment to him. But I never will argue that he possesses any inherent *right* to the regency; or that, as heir-apparent, he *can* possess such a right. There might even arise Princes of Wales whose conduct would justify the two houses in setting them aside from the regency. It becomes, therefore, expedient that we should not abandon the power inherent in us; nor, under the circumstances in which we are placed, fail to declare it to be our *right*."

If the Prince of Wales did not escape some reflections on the claim set up to the regency, Fox was treated with still more severity. The Earl of Abingdon, a nobleman of eccentric character, unguarded, and who, like myself, was once committed to the King's Bench prison for an act of imprudence, pointed out the inconsistency of Fox's conduct in alternately maintaining contradictory opinions. "These, my lords," exclaimed he, alluding to the asserted *right* of the prince to assume the government, "are the doctrines of the same man who, only a few years ago, meditated to pluck the crown from the king's head. He calls himself a whig; and while he is in the act of erecting a monumental column to commemorate the glorious *revolution*, he is tearing up the very ground on which reposes that revolution."—"I assert that *the right to model anew*, or, if necessary, *to alter the succession*, vests solely and exclusively

in parliament. This, my lords, is revolution doctrine ; this is *my* doctrine, though I am not a member of the Whig Club, nor have I subscribed to the intended *politico patriotic obelisk* which is to be raised in Runnymede."

At a very late hour, when the division took place, only *sixty-six* peers supported Lord Rawdon's *motion*, while *ninety-nine* negatived the proposition. The Dukes of York and Cumberland voted in the minority ; as the Duke of Gloucester would have likewise done, if he had not been prevented from attending by severe indisposition. All the lords of the bedchamber, with the single exception of the Duke of Queensberry, adhered to government. Thirteen bishops, including the Archbishop of Canterbury, were likewise found on that side ; three members of the episcopal bench voting with opposition. The Scottish peers ranged themselves, six with administration, seven on the other side. Among the latter noblemen, the Marquis of Lothian attracted severe animadversion by joining the prince's party. He commanded the first regiment of Life Guards, was constantly near the king's person, and peculiarly acceptable to him ; though, like Colonel Fitzpatrick, he was more fitted for that court of which Dryden says,

" Whitehall the naked Venus first revealed ;  
There standing, as at Cyprus in her shrine,  
The strumpet was adored with rites divine,"



than for the correct drawing-room of George the Third.

The Duke of Queensberry's desertion produced, if possible, a stronger sensation than even Lord Lothian's; the duke having been a lord of the bedchamber ever since the king's accession, during eight-and-twenty years. Two motives led him to vote with opposition on that night: his great personal intimacy with and devotion to the heir-apparent, joined to his conviction that the sovereign had irrecoverably lost his mind. The prince and his brother Frederic passed much of their time with the duke, at his residence in Piccadilly, principally at table; where plentiful draughts of champagne went round to the success of the approaching regency. Dr. Warren confirmed the duke's wavering faith in the hopeless condition of the king. Not many weeks subsequent to his majesty's seizure, before the close of November, the duke, desirous of forming his opinion, if possible, on solid grounds, drove to Windsor. His enquiries were solely directed to ascertain the probability of the king's recovery. The person to whom he particularly applied, an intimate friend of mine, gave him such strong reasons for believing it neither improbable nor remote, that he would have acquiesced in them. But Warren entering the apartment, and being informed of the object of the duke's visit, led him to a window, where they held a long con-

versation in a subdued tone of voice. The result was, that the duke, fully persuaded of the desperate nature of the malady, determined to join and to vote with the Prince.

*27th—31st December.*—The year now drew to its termination. Pitt, sustained by large majorities on two divisions in the house of commons, and on one division in the house of peers, already prepared to lay before the Prince of Wales the conditions on which the king's confidential servants intended to propose to parliament, that he should be invited and empowered to exercise the royal authority during his majesty's illness. No apparent amelioration had as yet taken place in the disorder with which he was afflicted; but Willis's long experience and attentive observation enabled him confidently to hold out expectations to the queen and to the ministers, that a complete restoration of his mind would ensue at no remote period. Warren as positively maintained the contrary opinion. The former physician obtained most credence at St. James's and at Kew; the latter, at Carlton and at Devonshire Houses. If the first was believed by the club at *White's*, the second was trusted at *Brooke's*. The house of commons attempted to meet on the 29th of the month, and Cornwall, the Speaker, though much indisposed, attended; but the number of members necessary for placing him in the chair not having arrived at four, no business

could be transacted. On the subsequent day, illness incapacitated the Speaker from appearing, and he never again entered within those walls. His death took place early in 1789; an event which added to the embarrassments of parliament and of the nation. The season was rendered more melancholy by the severity of the weather, which during successive weeks buried the capital in snow. Under these gloomy physical and political circumstances terminated the year 1788.

1789

*1st January.*—The first event which arrested attention at the commencement of the new year, was the death of Lord Grantley. He had occupied a conspicuous place under the reign of George the Third, and was considerably advanced beyond seventy at the time of his decease. After passing successively through the posts of solicitor and of attorney-general, Sir Fletcher Norton was placed in the Speaker's chair of the house of commons, by Lord North, early in 1770, on the demise of Sir John Cust; whose portrait, as drawn by Wilkes, conveys the meanest idea of his ability to fill the office. By the same minister, Norton was displaced in 1780; and I formed one of the majority on the occasion. Yet, though thus deprived, after ten years' service, of an employment which usually or invariably conducts among us to the peerage, he had the good fortune to enter the upper house within eighteen months subsequent to his exclusion from the chair:—a circumstance for which he was however more indebted to Lord Shelburne, than to the Marquis of Rockingham. The last-mentioned nobleman, who only survived about twelve weeks Sir Fletcher's elevation, would never have compelled the king to confer on him that dignity, if his majesty, at the Earl of

Shelburne's solicitation, had not created Dunning a peer. Lord Grantley was a bold, able, and eloquent, but not a popular pleader. *Junius* treats him with great severity. "This," says he, "is the very lawyer described by Ben Jonson," who

"Gives forked council; takes provoking gold  
On either hand, and puts it up.  
So wise, so grave, of so perplex'd a tongue,  
And loud withal, that would not wag, nor scarce  
Lye still, without a fee."

Acting constantly with opposition, he would have formed one of the minority in the house of peers on the division of the 26th of December, if he had not been prevented by illness. Cornwall, his successor in the Speaker's chair, followed him on the ensuing day, only surviving him about twenty-four hours; thus presenting to the metropolis the singular spectacle of two successive Speakers of the house of commons dying on two successive days. Under George the First, in 1720, London had witnessed two secretaries of state, Lord Stanhope and Mr. Craggs, lying dead at the same time. As Lord Grantley held the office of chief justice in eyre *south* of Trent, so Cornwall was possessed of the same office *north* of Trent. Both these lucrative sinecures were bestowed by Pitt, some months afterwards; the former on his brother's father-in-law, Lord Sydney; while with the other he gratified his friend John Charles Villiers.

*2nd—5th January.*—Never was any man in public situation less regretted, or sooner forgotten, than Cornwall! His death being notified on the same day, by Hatsell, the first clerk, to a large assemblage of members who crowded down to the house as soon as the intelligence of the Speaker's decease was announced; Rose, acting as minister in Pitt's absence, moved and carried an immediate adjournment. On the ensuing Monday, being the 5th of the month, the Earl of Euston, Pitt's colleague for the University of Cambridge, proposed Mr. William Wyndham Grenville to supply the vacant chair. Pulteney seconded the *motion*; observing, after the customary encomiums on Mr. Grenville, that "he possessed an hereditary claim to the favour of the house, as the guardian of their privileges; which he had contributed to fortify by his judicious alteration of his father's bill;" *the Grenville Act* for trying contested elections. On the other side, Sir Gilbert Elliot was started against the ministerial candidate. Neither the chancellor of the exchequer, nor Fox, took any part in the debate, which was short, and conducted on both sides with great moderation; but I believe not a word of regret, or even of approbation, was expressed for the character and services of the deceased Speaker, from any part of the house. In truth, he little deserved such recognitions of his official merit. The division formed a

test of the respective strength of the two parties. Grenville carried it by a majority of seventy-one, only 359 members voting, so that near two hundred were absent. The new Speaker was probably the youngest man who had attained since the reign of Edward the Third to so honourable an eminence, having scarcely accomplished his twenty-ninth year. This proof of ministerial influence being exhibited, the chancellor of the exchequer announced that on the following day he should open to the house the restrictions which he intended to propose as necessary to be annexed to the office of regent.

I have already stated, that Pitt having established, by the votes of both houses, the principle of the *right* inherent in them to *confer* the regency, in contradiction to Fox's and Lord Loughborough's assertion of the Prince of Wales's *right* to *assume* the regency, was now about to address his royal highness on the subject. He fulfilled that intention a very short time before the close of the year 1788. His letter was brief, if we consider the important nature of its contents; but free from all ambiguity, and respectful, without any mixture of unbecoming submission. It enumerated the leading restraints proposed to be laid on the future regent:—restraints unquestionably severe, if they had been calculated for duration; but Pitt expressly added that “they were formed

on the supposition that his majesty's illness would be only temporary." The prince, if he had chosen to adopt for his guidance the same assumption; and if, acting in conformity to it, he would only have allowed the existing government to remain untouched till it could be ascertained whether Warren or Willis was best founded in his conjectures; might have avoided all collision with the administration. Three or four months would have sufficed to make the experiment. A patriot heir-apparent would have so acted. Patriot advisers would have so counselled him. Or, if those words have no prototypes,—if patriot kings and ministers never existed except in the writings of Lord Bolingbroke; yet, wise, decorous, judicious counsellors would not have consented to take office till the lapse of a few weeks had enabled them to form some solid opinion respecting the continuance, or the cessation, of the king's malady. The gratitude and the approbation of the country would have repaid them for their delay in taking possession of power. Nay more, as soon as parliament and the nation had been convinced that no reasonable prospect presented itself of the full restoration of the royal faculties, they would have forced ministers to confer the prerogatives of the sovereign on his representative, without limitations. It was the belief, or at least it was the hope and wish generally cherished, of the king's



speedy recovery, that justified the chancellor of the exchequer in laying down restrictions, and enabled him to carry them in parliament.

The prince's answer to Pitt's letter was long, when compared with that of the minister. Concealed resentment, or rather, half-suppressed indignation, pervaded every line. Its composition was attributed to Fox, approved by Lord Loughborough, and if considered merely as a production of the pen, might merit praise. But, instead of accepting cheerfully the limited powers offered by ministers, and acquiescing in their supposition that a few weeks or months would replace his father in the exercise of his functions, the prince saw only "the weakness, disorder, and insecurity, that would pervade every branch of the administration." *He* beheld the sovereign consigned to a perpetual *strait waistcoat*, while Pitt confidently anticipated his resumption of the *sceptre*. He complained that "a plan should be offered to his consideration, by which government must be rendered difficult, if not impracticable, in his hands." He stigmatised it as "a project for dividing the royal family from each other." He denominated it "a scheme for disconnecting the authority to command service, from the power of animating it by reward; and for allotting to him all the invidious duties of government, without the means of softening them to the public by any one act of grace, favour, or benignity."

Yet, after thus strongly censuring, and almost criminating the fabricators of such a proposition, he finally consented to accept "the painful trust imposed on him," from considerations of a public nature. His letter was dated from Carlton House, on the 2nd of January. It may perhaps excite surprise that Fox should not himself have advised the prince to retain Pitt and the other ministers in office for two or three months, rather than seize on a government thus curtailed, the tenure of which was so precarious. But ambition, sharpened and impelled by poverty, could not listen to reason. Fox was already forty: Burke verged towards sixty. Neither the one, nor the other, possessed the means of comfortable independent subsistence. If once installed in office, they trusted to events, and to their own ability, for prolonging the duration of their power. Nor is it possible to assert that, putting public opinion out of the question, they reasoned on fallacious grounds. If the prince had been declared regent, and proceeded to exercise his authority, who can pretend to say what events might have taken place? It opens a wide field of speculation, on which I do not think proper to enter, for many reasons.

*6th January.*—Meanwhile, the state of the king became a subject of the most anxious contemplation. He had already remained during a period

of nearly ten weeks wholly deprived of reason, subjected at times to the most coercive treatment which it is necessary to use towards individuals in his calamitous situation. Many persons, even among those who most ardently desired his recovery, yet began to consider it as very doubtful. Every additional day seemed to diminish its probability; and the operation of that fact on the members of both houses who had hitherto supported administration, might be most injuriously felt, unless some favourable symptoms speedily manifested themselves. Willis, who displayed great professional skill in his treatment of the royal patient, invariably and confidently predicted the complete restoration of his intellect. But these assurances made little impression on the public mind. In every demand compatible with propriety, Willis indulged him. During one of his tranquil intervals, about this time, the king desired that a volume of Shakspeare's plays might be brought to him. Willis ordered it to be put into his hands, without previously adverting to the contents. It contained, among other tragedies, "King Lear." His insanity too, like that of *Lear*, exhibited all the characteristics of *royal* lunacy. He still felt and expressed himself as a *sovereign*, retaining a perfect consciousness of who he was, even amidst his privation of all intelligence. On or about the last day of December 1788, some

circumstances occurred in his malady, which, though unobserved by the other medical attendants, or not considered as forming grounds of hope, yet emboldened Willis to communicate them to the chancellor, with the gratifying assurance that he regarded them in a most favourable point of view. He added at the same time, that he did not expect the recovery to be near at hand. The information thus given, Lord Thurlow mentioned on the following day, when addressing the Duke of Norfolk in the house of peers, without however expressly naming Dr. Willis as his authority. Nevertheless, such an allusion, coming from so high a quarter, did not fail to produce a corresponding sensation throughout the metropolis, and operated as a support to ministers.

In order to counteract that impression, the leaders of opposition determined, if possible, to set on foot a new examination of the physicians; hoping that the result would tend to invalidate, if not wholly to overturn, Willis's prognostics. But, as a *motion* for the purpose would come with more effect from a country gentleman of independent character and fortune than from Fox or Sheridan, Mr. Loveden undertook to bring it before the house. I knew him well, and I believe he is still alive at the present time, in March 1820, though far advanced in life. He represented the borough of Abingdon in the county of Berks, near

which place he possessed a fine landed property. His figure, manners, and address, all bespoke a substantial yeoman, rather than a person of education and condition: but he did not want plain common sense, nor language in which to cloathe his ideas. He, such as I have described him, starting up unexpectedly, as the chancellor of the exchequer was preparing to open, in a most crowded house, the nature of the *restrictions* intended to be annexed to the regency, drew attention from the singularity of his interposition at such a moment: for I believe he had never, or scarcely ever, before risen to speak in that assembly. Commencing by a declaration that he was

“Nullius addictus jurare in verba magistri,”

though he had voted with the minority on one, and, I believe, on both the divisions of the 16th and of the 22nd of December; he proceeded to observe, that before the terms on which the regency should be conferred became matter of discussion, it imported to know accurately the *present* state of his majesty's health. A month having elapsed since the last *report* of the physicians, the house ought to be informed whether subsequently the probability of a recovery had encreased or diminished, as rumours of a contradictory nature were circulated. Limitations of the regent's power *might*, he added, be proper to a certain extent, if the suspension of the royal authority

should prove merely temporary ; but such a proposition would be very differently received, if little expectation existed of his majesty's restoration to reason. Finally, he moved to re-examine the physicians, for the purpose of ascertaining whether " the present symptoms afforded ground to hope for the king's *speedy* recovery."

Pitt, thus taken by surprise, exhibited, as he always did when pressed on any occasion of magnitude or difficulty, that calm, collected, prompt, sound judgment, which distinguished him from Fox throughout his political life. He opposed Loveden's *motion* as unnecessary ; all the physicians concurring in the probability of the king's recovery ; and expressed his great anxiety to restore the government, with as little delay as possible, to a state of energy and effect. Fox, while he concurred with the chancellor of the exchequer in the concluding sentiment, nevertheless urged the propriety of re-examining the physicians, because four weeks had elapsed without any alteration whatever in his majesty's health. The declaration made by Lord Thurlow in the other house, he censured in strong terms, as unsubstantiated by evidence or facts ; and therefore as only calculated, by holding out fallacious hopes, to gain votes. Burke did not limit himself to these remarks, but gave the reins to his irritable temper. Having congratulated the house on the

minister's declaration that he wished to restore energy and effect to the government, Burke observed that "those expressions ought to be realized; not to set up a maimed, crippled, and impotent mockery of government." Then diverging to the state of the sovereign's malady, he proceeded to read from the examination of one of the physicians, who had been examined before the committee of the house of peers, some answers which were unfavourable to the expectation of his majesty's recovery. Perceiving that the citations thus made excited marks of disapprobation from the ministerial benches, he burst into one of those transports of classic rage in which he frequently indulged. "It is," exclaimed he, "the duty of those who sit opposite, to pay due attention to the opinions delivered respecting the king's state, before they cut and carve the government as they would a carrion carcase for hounds, instead of immolating it as a sacrifice to the gods!"

George Vansittart, member for the county of Berks, (whose seat of Bisham Abbey lay in the vicinity of Windsor; who had always received distinguishing marks of royal regard, and whose sister had performed no ordinary part in the household of the late Princess Dowager of Wales;)—this gentleman asking across the floor to be informed of the physician's name whose opinion Burke had read, he answered that it was the exami-

nation of Dr. Warren. A loud cry arising among the friends of administration at the mention of a person regarded as so partial to the heir-apparent, Burke renewed a second time his exclamations. "Were their projects so soon ripe," he demanded, "that they ventured already to disclose their sentiments; meaning to construct a miserable machine of mutilated government on a foundation of falsehood, of fraud, and of calumny? Were they about to rob the first physician in England of his character?" Lord North, who was present, and seated near Burke, mindful of his former obligations to Warren, rose likewise, in order to do justice to his moral qualities and integrity, no less than to his medical skill; which he did in terms of high encomium. On the other hand, Pitt proved from Warren's own admission while on his examination, that however recognized might be his professional ability, yet, in the particular disorder under which his majesty suffered, his skill was comparatively little, as 'he owned that he always thought it necessary to call in others, to supply his own want of experience in that line of practice. Adverting next to Burke's violence, Pitt expressed his concern at the injury which such warmth must produce to Burke himself, "*as it seemed to arise from his entertaining wishes unlike those felt by the rest of the house.*" Finally, he admitted that after the asser-



tions which had been made, and the inferences which had been drawn, in the progress of the evening's debate, he found himself reduced to agree to a further enquiry. He hoped, however, that it might be terminated in a day or two, and he should therefore make no opposition to the appointment of a select committee for the purpose.

Burke now starting up a third time, attacked Pitt in the most personal manner. "I am necessitated," cried he, "to repel a malignant and unmerited imputation. When I fly from enquiry, then let the minister aim at me his envenomed shafts."—"If a difference of opinion exists among his majesty's medical attendants, why is not Dr. Munro called to give his advice? The keeper of one madhouse ought to be set against the keeper of another, and by their collision we shall arrive at the truth. Let the keeper of a madhouse with only thirty patients be opposed to one who has three hundred under his care! Thus will the house attain complete intelligence." Fox expressed himself with equal animation, but with more self-command. While he let loose his indignation at the motive attributed by the chancellor of the exchequer to Burke, Fox did not the less cloathe his emotions in measured language. Relative to the king, he declared that he had not the least doubt of the hopelessness of the case. Such was then indeed, I believe, the general opinion.

The debate being terminated, Pitt moved for the appointment of a committee "to examine anew the physicians." But Sheridan, not satisfied with those words, attempting to substitute others of a more comprehensive import, giving powers to the committee "to send for persons and papers, as well as to enquire into the probability of the king's *speedy* recovery," a division took place. Administration, on this trial of strength, fully sustained, and even exceeded, its former numbers; carrying the question by a majority of eighty, in a very full house, where four hundred and sixty-two members voted.

*7th—13th January.*—In consequence of Pitt's compliance with the object of Loveden's *motion*, the deliberations and proceedings of both houses of parliament became suspended during ten days. The prince's adherents, in thus supporting a new enquiry respecting the king's state, hoped to prove two points;—first, the augmenting improbability of his complete recovery; and next, that the probability of such an event became diminished from day to day, by the duration of his malady. If a general impression of these facts could once be established, they well knew that Pitt's majority would be sapped at its foundation. That majority, it appeared from the results of three successive divisions in the house of commons on the late questions, might be calculated at from sixty

to seventy; *above* the former, but *below* the latter number. Consequently, *thirty-five* members passing over from the ministerial side, to the other party, would give his royal highness the command of the assembly. In the upper house, the administration had indeed been supported, on the only division which had as yet taken place there, by ninety-nine peers, while their opponents could only reckon sixty-six. But Pitt's superiority of numbers, on which he could rely, might be estimated *under thirty*. *Fifteen* votes therefore withdrawn from government, and added to the opposition, might turn the scale. The lords of the bedchamber alone, *eleven* of whom had supported ministers on the 26th of December, if joined by three or four bishops, would suffice to overturn all Pitt's machinery. But, on the other hand, Fox and Lord Loughborough never seemed to recollect that the operation of time might save, as well as destroy, the minister. By preferring the *claim* of the heir-apparent to assume the regency, they had already lost almost a month. They now set on foot a new examination of the physicians, instead of propelling the election of a regent. Pitt was thus saved by his opponents.

Let us suppose that they had adopted opposite principles, had avoided every possible subject of contest or delay, simply accepting the regency as the donation of the two houses; and however

they might condemn or lament the restrictions imposed on the prince, yet had advised him cheerfully to submit to them, making ministers responsible for any inefficiency of the new government. If Fox had so acted, he would have speedily placed the heir-apparent in the regent's chair, invested with the insignia of royal power. A new administration would have been formed on the basis of *the coalition of 1783*, with some variations; Lord Stormont succeeding Lord North as secretary for the home department, and the great seal being virtually entrusted to Wedderburn, as first commissioner. The newly-installed regent would have opened the session with the accustomed forms, Lord Loughborough occupying the woolsack. In the other house, Fox and Burke would have addressed an audience always favourably disposed towards the individuals speaking from the treasury bench: while Pitt and Dundas, removed to another quarter of the assembly, must have experienced the chilling influence of departed power. Ireland would have been placed under the absolute dominion of the new government. Such must have been the circumstances under which the royal *Epimenides* would have *awoke* in February. Might not the very consciousness of his son's being actually regent, and the information that his first act of authority was to displace the ministers, have

tended to plunge the king's mind into new disorder? Is it quite certain that, after having been declared a lunatic by both houses of parliament,—a fact which must have been communicated to every European sovereign, by the British envoys at their respective courts, — George the Third would have resumed the functions of government? I know that he said to a nobleman who enjoyed much of his confidence,—I mean, the late Lord Walsingham,—who related it to me: “If a regency had been established, I would not have come forward to overturn it.” And though I make no question that his repugnance on that point would have been easily surmounted;—(for he loved power, and the exercise of it;—he was no voluptuary, nor votary of letters, who would have been content with a splendid retirement at Windsor, while his son governed;)—yet, if the Prince of Wales had once occupied his vacant seat, it might not have been easy to restore things to their former situation.

While the select committee, to the number of twenty-one,—where Pitt presided as chairman, and of which Burke, Sheridan, and other opposition leaders, were members,—remained in constant examination of the physicians; the two parties exerted their utmost efforts, the one to retain, and the other to augment, their respective adherents. Female auxiliaries were called into play on both



JANE, DUCHESS OF GORDON.

*Engraved by W. Read, from a Painting by Sir Joshua Reynolds*

London. Published by Richard Bentley 1836.



sides. The Duchess of Devonshire, whose blandishments had so eminently conduced to Fox's success as representative for Westminster in 1784, renewed her powerful applications in favour of the heir-apparent. Pitt and Dundas opposed to her the Duchess of Gordon. Far inferior to her rival in feminine graces, in accomplishments of mind, and in elegance of manners, the last-mentioned duchess possessed qualities not less useful, — pertinacity which no obstacles could shake, masculine importunity, emancipation from ordinary forms, — propelled by the hope of place, and by views of interest. Surrounded by five daughters, three of whom were already marriageable, their establishment in life occupied all her thoughts. Inhabiting at the time the splendid mansion belonging to the Marquis of Buckingham in Pall Mall, she there assembled on evenings a crowd of the most distinguished persons of both sexes, composed mostly of those attached to administration. I was one of the number. She even acted as a *whipper-in* of ministers. Confiding in her rank, her sex, and personal attractions, she ventured to send for members of parliament; to question, to remonstrate, and to use every means for confirming their adherence to government. The duke, her husband, who wanted her energy of character, did not on that account derive less benefit from her exertions. He received in due



time the great seal of Scotland as his remuneration; while Lord William Gordon, his brother, vice-admiral of the same kingdom, had long been made deputy ranger of St. James's and of Hyde Parks,—one of the most enviable sinecures in the gift of the crown.

The Prince of Wales and Duke of York, on the other hand, brought into action more solid and substantial means of seduction than female charms or solicitations. About this time, dinners began to be given at Carlton House on the Saturday and Sunday of every week; to which entertainments, thirty or more members, composed of both houses, were usually invited, and at which their royal highnesses presided in person. Wine, attentions, and promises were not spared. Governments, regiments, offices, preferments, titles, held out in prospect, retained the wavering, and allured the credulous or the discontented. Private negotiations were likewise set on foot in order to gain over the supporters of government. A man of high rank made me propositions of that nature. But the object which he had in view extended much beyond my single vote. The nobleman to whom I allude, the late Earl of Clermont, well knew that the Duke of Dorset, then our ambassador at the court of France, maintained with me a most unreserved correspondence. Through me, they hoped to reach *him*, who like-

wise brought in two members for the borough of East Grinstead. I consented to lay before the duke his royal highness's offers, which were of the most flattering nature, leaving him to appreciate them as he might think that they deserved. In his reply to me, he expressed a grateful sense of the prince's intentions ; adding, however, at the same time, his determination to take no political step whatever without his uncle the Marquis of Stafford's participation and approval. His answer terminated the negotiation, or rather, overture. The kingdom at large unquestionably gave its sanction to ministers. So did the city of London : but in Westminster, Fox's party predominated. Such was the aspect of public affairs towards the middle of the month of January.

*13th January.*—At length, after a week of incessant labour, Pitt, as chairman of the committee for re-examining the physicians, appeared at the bar of the house, holding in his hand the *report*. But scarcely had he brought it up, when Burke moved for its re-commitment, arraigned the conduct of the committee, and accused them of unfaithfully discharging their duty. "Why," he exclaimed, "had not the surgeons, apothecaries, and others, who had attended on his majesty, been summoned before them to give evidence? There were, moreover, additional grounds of complaint ; consisting in the omission or concealment

of many circumstances necessary for forming a just estimate of the king's state, and the probability of his cure." Against Willis, Burke directed the most acrimonious remarks; averring that, in his own opinion, and, he believed, in the opinion of other members of the committee, "*his majesty's life was not safe in such hands.*" He added, however: "I do not mean to impute bad intentions to any individual. It is of the rashness of those to whom the care of his royal person is entrusted that I complain." Pitt treated with some degree of levity, not to say of ridicule, these charges. "The house," he said, "would not probably think the enquiry had been improperly *narrowed*, when the bulk of the *report* laid on the table, consisting of nearly four hundred folio pages, was duly considered. Every one of the physicians had undergone the most rigorous, as well as repeated examinations." Relative to the accusation of the king's life not being safe in such hands, "it arises," continued Pitt, "from the fact having been disclosed and avowed, that Dr. Willis had trusted a razor in his majesty's hand;" an experiment which Willis justified by reasons founded on his long experience, and knowledge of the disorder. Windham attempted to sustain Burke; but they did not venture to divide on the *motion* for recommitting the *report*. It was therefore ordered to be printed, the 16th of the month

being fixed for taking into consideration the state of the nation.

16th January.—Never perhaps was greater and more general expectation excited than when the chancellor of the exchequer rose for the purpose of disclosing the conditions on which he proposed to offer the regency to the Prince of Wales! And never did that eloquent minister acquit himself with more consummate ability than on the evening in question. Blending the details of every feature of his plan with admirable brevity, Pitt began by observing, that though the *report* recently laid on the table disclosed a vast mass of information on the subject of his majesty's disorder, yet, in his opinion, it afforded little new matter for deliberation; and no grounds whatever for impeaching the propriety and prudence of those measures which, ten days earlier, he had been prepared to submit for their consideration. He followed up this remark by another, applied personally to Fox, who had argued that the probability of the king's cure was diminished, because a month had elapsed since the *first* inquiry, without any perceptible amelioration of his health: whereas, all the physicians, however divided they might be on other points, coincided in asserting that the ultimate cure rested precisely on the same foundation as it had done in December. Then discussing the depositions of the different

medical attendants, comparing and contrasting them, he endeavoured to impress a conviction that, at least in the opinion of two,—namely, Willis and Sir Lucas Pepys,—there was an *abatement of disorder*, though as yet no resumption of reason. Finally, he entered into a defence of the queen, who had subjected herself to some animadversions, for having attempted, through the medium of the diurnal *reports*, or bulletins, to convey a more favourable impression of his majesty's condition than was quite warranted by fact.

Pitt next proceeded to repeat the principles and bases on which he had already proposed to invest the heir-apparent with a considerable portion of the royal authority. Yet, in so doing, he conjured the house “to provide only for the necessity of the case, not to exceed it; and, above all things, to recollect that they were not placing a king on the throne, but to bear in mind that the throne was full.” Having reasoned, with great historical knowledge of the subject, on the immutable distinction between a monarch and a regent, he then enumerated the four principal restrictions necessary, as he conceived, to be imposed on the Prince of Wales. The *first* restrained him from granting peerages, except to his majesty's sons, if they should previously have attained the age of twenty-one years. In order to impress the propriety of this regulation, as drawn from past experience,

Pitt did not hesitate to urge "the possibility of such another confederacy and cabal forming in the state, as had attempted to overthrow the constitution in 1783." "They," continued he, "might offer advice to *the regent* of a nature which would probably be rejected by *the crown*. Such a number of peers might in consequence be created as must greatly embarrass the sovereign in carrying on the government, whenever he shall be restored to health." It cannot be denied that the danger here depicted was founded in reason.

To the *second* restriction, by which the regent was prevented from bestowing annuities or patent places *for life*; as well as to the *third*, which withheld from him all power over the king's *personal property*; little or no objection could be urged. On the *fourth* and last restraint, by which the care of his majesty's person was to be consigned to the queen, Pitt expatiated with more animation; "it being," he said, "his intention to put the whole royal household under that princess's authority, investing her with full powers to dismiss, or to appoint, at her pleasure." Conscious that such an independent control placed her in a sort of opposition to her son, and might even lead to collision between them, the minister entered into some justification of its principle. In language of energy, he depicted the emotions which must painfully rend the bosom of the king, when

“ *waking* from his trance of reason, and asking for his usual attendants, if he should be told that his subjects, taking advantage of his temporary privation of intellect, had dismissed and changed them.”

Having thus enumerated the restraints which he was desirous of imposing on the future regent, Pitt candidly admitted that a retinue adequate to his high station ought to be provided for him by parliament. Before the minister concluded, he stated likewise his intention of proposing a council for her majesty, to the members of which body she might have recourse in cases of difficulty; limited, however, to the power of merely offering her their advice. Neither Fox nor Burke rose to answer him. They well knew how much more forcibly the house would be affected by the appeal of a county member, who united independence of mind to distinguished talents, than by any display of oratory or eloquence. Powis combined in himself all those qualities. Almost every feature of the proposed plan he held up to condemnation, as “ a monstrous fabric, calculated to mutilate and dismember the constitutional prerogatives entrusted to the crown. — Gracious Heaven !” exclaimed Powis, “ is it necessary that the government should be entirely new-modelled ? Are the regal rights inherent in the *person* of his majesty ? Or, are they not annexed to the kingly

*office*? Has the heir-apparent acted unbecomingly during his father's illness? Has he attempted by cabal or intrigues to wrest from the king his sceptre? Has he been guilty of the crime of treason?" "It is asserted that he may have bad advisers. May not the queen too have bad advisers? The country will regard their conduct with peculiar jealousy." "I consider these *resolutions*," pursued he, "as likely to excite animosities, not only throughout the kingdom, but in the royal family, and to arm the mother against her son. I regard them as equally subversive of the constitution with the *East India Bill* of 1783; and as I cannot consent to parcel out the prerogatives of the British crown at the pleasure of an individual, I will move an *amendment*."

Lord North and Sheridan both attacked the minister; the former, with the arms of reason, exemplified and illustrated by appeals to history. Sheridan called in as auxiliaries not only his characteristic weapons of wit and ridicule, but he preferred personal accusations against Pitt. Lord North depicted with force the calamities that would infallibly arise from a violation of the constitution. Sheridan charged the chancellor of the exchequer with duplicity, arrogance, and calumny; repelling with scorn all the imputations which he had thrown on *the coalition administration*. After holding up Dr. Willis to universal reprobation



tion, as an empiric, if not as an impostor, on account of the favourable symptoms which he pretended to have discovered in the king's malady ; (every one of which became verified within a few weeks ;) Sheridan directed his next observations to a higher quarter. The manner in which the queen had been mentioned appeared to be, he said, the result of premeditated design to provoke a discussion respecting her majesty's conduct. Those persons only who wished to give her responsibility by taking her out of that domestic station in which she had acted so irreproachably, manifested a want of delicacy towards her. "The true motive," continued Sheridan, "of the minister's line of policy, is his belief that the regent will change the administration, and will place it in the hands of those who, as he dares to assert, have been convicted of a confederacy to overturn the constitution. Yet with *them*, after they had completed their coalition, he had professed his readiness to form a junction." Towards the conclusion he drew an animated picture, or rather, caricature of the *ex*-minister, as he designated Pitt, coming down in state, under the future regency, to the house, preceded by the lord steward, the lord chamberlain, and the master of the horse, clearing his way through the lobby,—with the cap of liberty borne before him on the end of a white staff.

Fullarton, strongly attached to the heir-apparent, and equally averse to Pitt, attempted to draw a parallel between the reign of Charles the Sixth, king of France, and that of George the Third. Both sovereigns had been rendered incapable of conducting public affairs by a privation of intellect. Fullarton endeavoured to shew that Isabella of Bavaria, queen of France, and her confidential minister, Morvilliers,—the former one of the most vicious as well as unnatural princesses commemorated in history; the latter, an ambitious and unprincipled politician,—were realized and resuscitated before their eyes. He depicted the queen of Charles the Sixth as “a woman attached only to her treasures, influenced by the *chancellor*, the *prime minister*, and other principal officers of the court; who apprehended that if the government should be entrusted to the *heir-apparent* during the king’s incapacity, they would lose their employments.” Morvilliers was described by Fullarton as “commencing his career in the profession of the law, but speedily opening for himself a nearer road to greatness by the more productive path of politics.” Finally, he pourtrayed the prince, afterwards Charles the Seventh of France; “who possessed,” he said, “not only the most interesting qualities and the most fascinating manners, but who had attached to his cause the noblest spirits and the best abili-

ties of his country." Some striking points of similarity unquestionably existed between the two periods of time, as well as a faint resemblance in the leading personages of each country, sufficient at least to furnish matter for parliamentary declamation.

A division took place on Powis's *amendment* to Pitt's *first resolution*, which proposed to confer the regency on the heir-apparent, "subject to such limitations as should be provided;" Powis's object being to emancipate him in great measure from those restraints. Government carried the question by *seventy-three* votes. Fox, who suffered at the time under severe indisposition, which soon compelled him to discontinue his personal attendance, took no active part throughout the whole discussion. But when, after its decision, the chancellor of the exchequer moved the next *resolution*, which precluded the future regent from creating peers, Fox endeavoured to limit the *duration* of the restriction. A second division ensued, which administration again carried, though with reduced numbers. The opposition rose from 154 to 159; while government fell from 227 to 216, leaving a majority of only *fifty-seven*. I voted with ministers throughout every stage, and on every question, of this great conflict. Pitt's two subsequent *resolutions*,—the first of which regarded annuities or patent places *for life*, and the

latter withheld from the regent any power over his father's *personal* property, -- were not contested. The house then adjourned, each side anticipating with anxiety the next proposition which would be agitated ; namely, that of committing the king's person to her majesty's care, and at the same time putting the whole royal household under her control. Fox postponed his departure for Bath until the event should be ascertained.

19th January. — When the house met, Pitt immediately opened his proposition relative to the queen. On the propriety of committing to *her* care the person of his majesty, the minister said that he would not anticipate an objection, because he did not believe a difference of opinion to be possible on the subject. But he argued at considerable length the sound policy, propriety, and other motives combining to allot the direction of the royal household to the same hand. Pitt was powerfully supported on that night from various quarters. By Dundas, who, for the first time since the commencement of the session, took part in the debate ; and who not only defended with his characteristic boldness the measure under deliberation, but accused the opposite party of bringing forward such dangerous doctrines as rendered it necessary to counteract them, thus occasioning all the delay that had intervened. By Scott, the solicitor-general, whose conspicuous

parliamentary, as well as professional talents, already opened to him a prospect of attaining the highest dignities of the law. Perhaps, nevertheless, ministers derived more efficient service from Pulteney. His figure and dress, which always brought before my imagination Pope's *Sir John Cutler*, — his whole wardrobe being threadbare, — did not detract from the vigour of his understanding, nor from the perspicuity of his arguments.

Throwing the whole force of his reason into the ministerial scale, he treated with contempt the supposition, either that the actual administration would factiously oppose the prince's ministers; or that these latter, if they conducted themselves well, could possibly fail of receiving general support. "What!" observed Pulteney, "cannot they govern without having the nomination of every butcher and baker belonging to the royal household! If they act uprightly, they will stand in need of no such patronage. Even if a faction should arise, a dissolution of parliament is a remedy to which they can always have recourse. I was not present when the *right* of the two houses to provide for the deficiency of the executive authority, and to name a regent, became matter of debate. But on such an occasion I would have given my hearty vote in its support; and I shall now vote as heartily in favour of

the restrictions. Never will I admit the probability of a cabal being formed in the house of peers hostile to the regent's ministers. If, indeed, another measure as unconstitutional as the memorable *East India Bill* should be again introduced, I readily allow that the bedchamber lords may form a powerful obstacle to its progress." Fox did not rise till a very late hour; and as his design of quitting the scene of politics for a short time, in order to recover sufficient health for undertaking the charge of the foreign department, was well known, he drew more than ordinary attention. Addressing himself first to Scott, the solicitor-general, whom Fox accused of "endeavouring to entangle the understanding of his hearers in the sophistries of legal metaphysics, he successively adverted to the arguments of Dundas and of Pulteney. Conscious that the present occasion would be the last in which he should personally take any part before the decision of the regency question, he seemed to put out all his intellectual strength.

Scott having laid down as an incontrovertible proposition, that "the king's *political* character was in the eye of the law inseparable from his *personal*, and so would continue until his demise," Fox turned against this doctrine all the artillery of reason and of ridicule. "I consider such a tenet," said he, "as fitted only for ages of igno-

rance, when human institutions were deified, and declared to be of divine origin. That a sense of duty, loyalty, and affection will animate the breast of every Englishman, and will lead him to protect his majesty's sacred person, however long his malady may prove, is unquestionable. But, when this is stated to be the definition of *allegiance*, I enter against it my protest. Allegiance is a reciprocal duty, arising in the heart, emanating from the mind, as a consequence of receiving protection; and it is only of equal existence. If the definition of allegiance given from the treasury bench was well founded, whether the king's malady should continue for one year, or for thirty, the legislature could never vest the full powers of the crown in any other hands while the person of the sovereign remained on earth. That such is the latent design of ministers I have no doubt, though at present they may think it prudent to conceal their intention."

Having depicted the hardship of precluding the regent from the prerogative of creating peers, while it was intended to place the household under the queen's exclusive control; "To all this series of paradoxes," exclaimed he, "there can be only one solution. Ministers wish to insinuate the scandalous idea, that a division may take place between the mother and the son. I cannot utter in language of adequate indignation

my abhorrence of such a plan. Yet I confess that the machination is artfully laid for accomplishing the intended purpose. I trust, however, that it will be prevented.”—“It has been asked,” continued Fox, “what would be the consequence of the queen’s demise? If the prince regent should die, the mode of proceeding would be easy and simple. The next prince in succession, the Duke of York, if alive, or Prince William Henry, would be appointed to the office. But, if the queen should die, in whose hands would they entrust the custody of the king? In those of the Duke of York? Would ministers endeavour to divide the royal brothers? The attempt, I believe, they will find as difficult as to remove the planets from their orbits! We have lived to see this supposititious case realized, thirty years after it was stated in parliament.

Fox concluded his speech, many parts of which were unanswerable, by putting two questions to the minister. First, if the custody of the royal household was to be given to the queen, *when* was the provision intended for the regent to be settled, and *what* was to be its extent? Secondly, if the intended restrictions were to have a *limited* duration, *what period* of time should he consider as proper for their continuance? To these enquiries the chancellor of the exchequer answered, that it was difficult to fix any precise term for the



duration of the restrictions. "Should however," continued he, "contrary to my *sanguine expectation and belief*, the king's recovery, *after some time*, be protracted, and should it be pronounced by his medical attendants, unlikely to take place *soon*; my opinion would be to withdraw altogether the restrictions, including the prerogative of creating peers. The establishment of the royal household *may likewise then* be revised and new-modelled." A more undefined and vague reply probably never proceeded from ministerial lips. Desirous nevertheless to give some satisfaction on another very interesting point, Pitt added, "Whenever the act of the two houses shall have passed constituting his royal highness regent, a proper retinue ought to be immediately provided for supporting his station with becoming splendour. Of what precise extent the provision should be, I have not yet fully determined. The declaration made on the prince's part, expressive of his reluctance to encrease the national burthens, is most magnanimous. But no dread of unpopularity shall deter me from proposing a new establishment, suitable to the illustrious rank and character of the regent. *I know not whether I shall be left to propose this matter, or whether it may not devolve to other hands. In either case, in or out of office, I am ready to stand up in my place, and to lay the additional expence where it ought to fall, on the public purse of the country.*"

By this guarded disclosure of his intentions, without naming any particular *time* for carrying them into execution, Pitt still kept his opponents in ignorance of his ultimate plans. If he had possessed a prescience of the king's speedy recovery, he could not have taken his measures with more consummate ability. Irritated at the obscurity of the minister's replies, Sheridan reminded him that he had given no answer whatever as to the intended *duration* of the restrictions, while he had totally omitted to explain the nature and constitution of *the council* which was to be provided for the queen. Thus pressed, he somewhat reluctantly owned that it was impossible for him to state *any fixed period* for taking off the restrictions; but he added, "Parliament will always possess the power of removing them." To the other object of Sheridan's enquiry, he gave a much more explicit reply. "It would only be a council of advice, and in no degree of control. The great officers of state, with some dignified prelates, were intended to compose it." After a debate of full twelve hours, a division at length took place on the question of giving to her majesty the power of removing, and of appointing, at her pleasure, the officers of the king's household. One hundred and sixty-five votes negatived the proposition. The minister was supported by two hundred and twenty-nine; leaving him a majority of

*sixty-four*. But Lord North immediately afterwards moving to add the words, "for a limited time," the house divided again; when Pitt's followers fell to 220, while the opposite side lost one vote, being 164. Consequently government carried the point only by *fifty-six*.

The debate was now terminated, when Pulteney offered a clause for limiting both the duration of the proposed restrictions, and of the powers to be conferred on the regent by parliament. But Pitt, who while he affected to propel the decisions of the house, nevertheless proceeded with measured steps, like a man desirous, as far as he was able, of allowing time its full operation; though he professed his general coincidence of sentiment with Pulteney, and a readiness to adopt the proposition itself, yet dextrously evaded its immediate acceptance. Fox contented himself with observing, that such repeated elections of the chief magistrate, however he might be denominated regent, in fact changed the constitution from a limited monarchy to a republic. The various *resolutions* successively moved by Pitt being finally passed, were ordered to be communicated to the lords, at a conference between the managers of the two houses, on the following day. To that assembly all eyes were directed; and the commons, in order to allow time for their deliberations, suspended their own, by an adjournment of a week.

Fox, extenuated by exertions, and enfeebled by a complaint the seat of which lay in the liver, after vainly contesting against administration, set out for Bath; Burke and Sheridan remaining at their posts, to dispute the ground with Pitt.

*20th—26th January.*—Two debates, each marked by circumstances of much personal asperity, took place in the upper house, on the 22nd and 23rd of January. The former was opened by Lord Camden, then in the seventy-fourth year of his age; who, after the first *resolution* sent up from the commons had been read, observed, that “his advanced period of life furnishing the strongest reason for his retirement from public business, he trusted the present act would form the last effort of his political existence.” Throughout his whole speech he displayed all his characteristic intellectual superiority, though the great energies of character which had distinguished him during the early part of George the Third’s reign, in the cause of freedom, appeared to be sinking under the pressure of time. Not so the chancellor; who, as if he designed to atone for his meditated defection at an early stage of the king’s malady, unfolded all the powers of his capacious and vigorous intellect. But the most conspicuous exhibition of parliamentary eloquence made on that night, was by Watson, bishop of Llandaff; a prelate of no ordinary ability or ambition, who has left us

memoirs of his own life. His speech, which occupied nearly two hours in the delivery, would unquestionably have secured him an English mitre of the most solid description, and probably have translated him to Durham, or to Winchester, if the regency had been consummated, and its supporters had remained permanently in possession of power. The king's recovery chained him down for life to an obscure Welsh diocese. On the *resolution* being read which restricted the regent from the prerogative of creating peers, the Earl of Sandwich moved to add the words, "for a time to be limited." A division taking place, the *motion* was negatived by a majority of *twenty-six* peers; the respective numbers being 93 to 67. And the house dividing a second time, on the main question, ministers carried it by *twenty-eight* votes.

The discussion was renewed on the subsequent evening, chiefly relative to the *resolution* committing to her majesty the custody of the king's person, accompanied with the control and management of the royal household. Towards its close; the chancellor might be said to sustain and to repel, almost unassisted, the whole weight of opposition, conducted by Lords Loughborough and Stormont. Thurlow standing as it were over the prostrate body of his sovereign, claimed for him the respect due to his lamentable situation:—"a

misfortune," he observed, "equal to any which had ever fallen to the lot of man, since misfortune was known on earth!" — "I cannot conjecture," exclaimed he, "upon what principle it is possible to place the king in her majesty's hands, without committing to her the superintendence of the household; nor how the dignity of a sovereign can be preserved, unless he retains his attendants. Let it be remembered that he is not a destitute individual, friendless or obscure; but a monarch to whom his people look up with anxious wishes that he may speedily re-ascend his throne. Any other treatment must manifest a total want of compassion for that royal sufferer, who then would be

"Deserted in his utmost need,  
By those his former bounty fed!"

The sensibility which the chancellor displayed throughout this part of his speech, and which was not confined to himself, excited Burke's spleen; who treated it as hypocritical grimace. When the house of commons met, a few days afterwards, he compared "the tears shed in another assembly to the iron tears that ran down Pluto's cheek;" protesting at the same time, that "they were not tears of patriots for dying laws, but of lords for their expiring places. They were tears for his majesty's bread."

Lord Stormont, touched at Thurlow's citation;

immediately rose, and observed that however general might be the application of the words just quoted, yet he could not avoid considering them as peculiarly addressed to himself. "I have, indeed, my lords," continued he, "enjoyed the highest honours, and passed the greatest part of my life, in the enjoyment of emoluments, conferred by his majesty. I come, therefore, under the description of those individuals who have largely shared in the royal bounty. But I trust that I have not repaid them with ingratitude. I love his majesty, I love the Prince of Wales; but I love still more the constitution. This declaration I now make in presence of some members of the royal family, and I shall not hesitate to repeat it before my sovereign himself, if I am ever restored to his presence." Reverting to the subject under deliberation, he reasoned with force, sustained by examples drawn from history, against a system which might oppose the mother to her son. "Recollect, my lords," said he, "the instance of Mary of Medicis and Louis the Thirteenth, where an artful minister set them at variance. In my opinion, the person who is entrusted with the king's custody ought *not* to have the control over the household. It is cruel thus to throw her majesty on a stormy political sea, without a rudder, chart, or compass." — "Who may be her advisers, I know not; but she may have counsellors who may per-

suade her, that she cannot render a greater service to her son, and to the country, than by attempting to rescue him from the pernicious hands in which he has reposed his confidence. From the division of power contemplated, I expect to see the standard of opposition erected in the centre of the queen's palace." It must be admitted that if the regency had permanently taken place, these apprehensions were not altogether destitute of foundation, nor of probability. Lord Loughborough not only maintained the same propositions, but declared in terms the most precise, that far from abandoning his assertion of the Prince of Wales's *right* to the regency during his father's incapacity, he was ready to defend it against the chancellor. On the division, 96 peers supported ministers, while only 68 voted with their opponents.

*26th and 27th January.*—Pitt's numerical superiority being now incontestably ascertained by repeated divisions in both houses, and Fox having personally withdrawn, the contest might in some measure be considered as terminated. But altercation and reproaches survived the struggle for power. The chancellor of the exchequer informing the house at its meeting, that he should propose to lay *the resolutions* before the Prince of Wales, in order to know whether his royal highness would accept of the regency on those conditions, Burke started up under violent agitation. Every



part of the minister's conduct, he said, was despotic in the extreme. He had forced the discussion on the question of *right*, merely for purposes of delay. He had in fact thus addressed the house: "Slaves, do you presume to hesitate, or hint a doubt on the point? I will satisfy your scruples. The question *shall* be debated and decided." Unintimidated by the indecent severity of these remarks, Pitt did not the less *move* on the subsequent evening, "for appointing a committee to communicate to his royal highness *the resolutions* of the lords and commons; expressing at the same time their hopes that he would comply, by taking on him the office of regent as speedily as an act of parliament could be passed." This proposition called out all the leaders from the opposite benches. Sheridan observed, that *the resolutions* appeared to be final and permanent, not as if calculated to answer a temporary emergency; though upon that single ground, urged repeatedly by the minister himself, had they been voted. Another matter, Sheridan added, which still remained wholly unexplained, was the degree of state and attendance intended to be annexed to the office of regent, as a substitute for that power and patronage taken from him by the last *resolution*. He concluded by moving to add, that "the restrictions were formed on the supposition that his majesty's illness was only temporary, and might not prove

of long duration." It seemed difficult to suppose that Pitt could make any objection to insert these words, they being extracted from his own letter addressed to the Prince of Wales on the preceding 30th of December.

Grey rising next, accused the minister of having manifested a want of respect towards the heir-apparent throughout every stage of his intercourse with Carlton House: a charge which Grey laboured to prove by an enumeration of various particulars. There seemed, however, to be more of enmity than of justice in these details; as they amounted, even if well founded, rather to breaches of etiquette, or omissions of form, than to any disrespectful intention. But Burke far exceeded both his friends in violence. The question, he maintained, was obviously an endeavour to create unnecessary delay; as was the whole ministerial system, to convert the constitution into a republic, by the annual election of a regent. "If," continued he, "it is intended to erect a republic, why is it not avowed? Should I be asked whether I dislike a commonwealth, I would answer, No. I am however aware that, according to our frame of government, we cannot speculate on a republic." Having then eulogized, in language the most picturesque and classic, the true republican principles as transmitted down to us from antiquity, which he declared were objects of his

utmost reverence and idolatry, he burst at once into a paroxysm of rage at "the phantom, the fiction of law," as he denominated it, by which Pitt intended to open the session of parliament. "So far is it," vociferated he, "from representing faithfully the forms of our admirable constitution, that it is a mere mummery, a piece of masquerade buffoonery, formed to burlesque every species of government! A hideous spectre, to which, with Macbeth, when addressing the ghost of Banquo, we may exclaim,

"'Avaunt, and quit my sight! Let the earth hide thee!  
Thy bones are marrowless: thy blood is cold.  
Thou hast no speculation in those eyes  
That thou dost glare with.'

So is it with this ministerial political spectre. Its bones are marrowless, its blood is cold, and it has no speculation in its eyes. I reprobate it as a chimæra, a monster summoned up from the depths of hell!" This beautiful picture, which seemed to electrify the house, excited great admiration, even on the treasury bench.

Pitt repelled with temperate composure his numerous and eloquent assailants. To Sheridan he replied, that the proposed *amendment*, though consisting of words taken out of his own letter to the Prince of Wales, yet was only a *partial selection* of them, omitting other words which followed, and formed their explanation. He therefore

should object to any such insertion. The delays which had hitherto impeded the progress of the *Regency Bill*, he demonstrated to have originated, not with ministers, but with their opponents. Turning next to Grey, he recapitulated the various acts, either of omission and neglect, or of positive disrespect towards the heir-apparent, with which he stood charged; justifying himself on each, as it appeared to me, in a manner the most satisfactory to any candid mind. "The highest tribute of respect," continued he, "that I can offer to every branch of the royal family, is to cultivate the interests of the nation which their ancestors were called to govern; and to watch over the safety of that constitution, in the protection of which the prince himself will be eventually interested." Having thus answered two of his opponents, he omitted any reply to Burke; whose arguments, though fabricated by genius and illuminated by fancy, produced no solid impression. Sheridan still persisted in his *amendment*; the objection made to which by the chancellor of the exchequer, he endeavoured to obviate by adding to his *motion* the remaining words of the sentence contained in Pitt's letter to the Prince of Wales. But the question being carried without a division, for communicating to his royal highness the *resolutions* of the two houses, Pitt then *moved* an address to the queen. Its object was to ascertain

whether she would accept the care of his majesty's person, together with the management and control of the royal household. No opposition was attempted.

*28th—31st January.*—The minister's situation during the last days of January was nevertheless peculiarly arduous and critical. From the summit of power, he beheld himself suddenly about to be precipitated by an event of the most unexpected nature, against which he neither had taken, nor could take, any measure of precaution. Three months had already elapsed since the king's seizure, and no indications of restoration to intellect were as yet perceptible. The violence of the delirium or frenzy had, indeed, greatly abated, and Willis confidently anticipated his speedy resumption of reason. But Warren as confidently maintained the contrary position. Pitt possessed no landed estate, no funded property, nor even life annuity. He had disdained to bestow on himself the clerkship of the pells, and it was not till some years later that he was made lord warden of the Cinque Ports. His brother, Lord Chatham, as necessitous as Pitt, could afford him no relief. I doubt whether the first lord of the treasury and chancellor of the exchequer, when his debts were discharged, possessed a thousand pounds. Europe might then have witnessed the extraordinary spectacle of a prime minister not.

yet thirty, who, after distributing nearly forty British peerages, besides fifteen Irish; after creating a sinking fund of a million sterling, humbling France, and by the vigour of his councils extricating Holland from subservience to the house of Bourbon; was reduced to return for support to the bar, as in antiquity Cincinnatus went back to the plough. Pitt unquestionably meditated to resume his original profession. By what other means, in fact, could he have maintained his personal independence? Fox, destitute of any such resource, found himself compelled to accept the assistance of his friends at a subsequent period of his life, however painful it might be to his feelings. Dundas's situation was scarcely less destitute, in a pecuniary point of view, than that of Pitt.

Nor were the embarrassments of the minister by any means merely future and prospective. In his own cabinet he had to encounter daily impediments, or mortifications, arising from the rugged, intractable temper of the chancellor, who frequently would neither advise, dictate, nor comply. These internal agitations, which could not always be concealed from the public ear, served to invigorate opposition. I remember, Sir Grey Cooper, when alluding, on the 27th of January, to Pitt's assertion, that "the two houses of parliament constituted the only *legal organs* through

which the voice of the people could be heard during the king's indisposition," observed that "perhaps, by some accident, one of those *organs* might be out of tune. Whispers of such a discord had been heard; and, therefore, till that instrument was again restored to order, and the great leaders of the band should have settled their respective parts in the concert, an interlude might probably be played off to amuse this house." Burke, in the course of the same evening, spoke out even more plainly on the subject. "I know not," said he, "whether the postponement of the present measure in the other house, which was intended to have come on last night, arose from any difference among ministers; but a little bird, a small robin-redbreast, has sung that something of the kind has taken place. The same bird has whispered in my ear, that certain secret reasons have suddenly induced the house of peers to shift the business from their own, to our shoulders. Perhaps that dignified assembly has not yet recovered from the effect caused by the burst of the pathetic lately exhibited. They probably have not yet dried their eyes, and may be therefore at present incapable of attending to new business."

Pitt, it is true, denied the truth of these painful reports. "I can assure the house," said he, "notwithstanding the mysterious insinuations of a

want of harmony among ministers, that there has arisen no such difference of opinion." The chancellor did not, however, confirm the declaration thus made : for on the following evening, the 28th of January, during the debate which arose in the upper house, relative to the two proposed addresses to the prince and to the queen, he said, while replying to Lord Stormont,—“ I own that I could have chalked out a plan which I should have approved in preference to the line that has been adopted. But, when I consider that many other men's opinions must be consulted, the present measure is perhaps the best that could be brought forward during the agitation of the moment.” He could not more unequivocally avow the dissensions that prevailed in the ministerial councils. Meanwhile, the peers having concurred in *the resolutions* adopted by the commons for addressing the prince and queen ; Earl Camden and the Marquis of Stafford were ordered to wait on his royal highness, in order to receive his answer. Pitt, accompanied by the master of the rolls, Lord Frederick Campbell, and Sir George Yonge, performed, on the part of the commons, the same function. The heir-apparent received this deputation at Carlton House on the 30th of January ; an anniversary on which, as commemorative of the decapitation of Charles the First, neither of the two houses met for the dispatch of public business.



The imperious necessity of restoring the executive government superseded, however, every other consideration. On the same day the address was carried up to her majesty at Kew, by two members of the upper and four members of the lower house.

31st January.—The prince's answer, of which Sheridan was considered the composer, manifested great discontent at the manner of offering him the regency, and at the conditions annexed to its exercise; though he added, that "his anxious concern for the public safety, and his respect for the united desires of the two houses, determined him to undertake the trust." He contrived, however, to embody in his reply the very words which Sheridan had vainly endeavoured to insert in Pitt's *motion* of the 27th of January, for communicating to his royal highness *the resolutions* of the lords and commons. "Confiding," said he, "that the limitations on the exercise of the royal authority have been approved only as *a temporary measure*, founded on the hope that his majesty's disorder *may not be of long duration*, I accede to your wishes." The queen's reply was brief, but mingled with testimonies of her respect for the desire manifested by parliament to commit to her care the king's person. As soon as the peers met, after the answers of the queen and prince had been read, Lord Camden stated that the next necessary

step was to determine on the means by which the royal assent might be given to such *bills* as should have been passed by the two houses respecting the exercise of the powers of the crown. "I am aware," observed he, "that the means by which it is intended to open the parliament have been contemptuously stigmatized elsewhere as *a fiction* and *a phantom*. But it is a fiction admirably calculated for preserving the constitution. The king must be upon his throne in this assembly, or by some mode he must sanction our proceedings. Otherwise, parliament is a mere headless trunk, incapable of legislation. The legal and constitutional expedient is by issuing letters patent under the great seal, authorizing a commission to open parliament in his majesty's name."

"If there exist any other means of accomplishing this national object," continued he, "I hope those who so think will suggest them. But I venture to assert, that whoever treats as matter of ridicule the mode that I have proposed, is ignorant of the laws of his country. The commission must be issued by authority of some kind. Can the Prince of Wales command the chancellor to put the seal to such a commission? Certainly he cannot. Both houses have recently voted that he possesses no such right. Would the chancellor himself, unauthorized, venture to do it? Undoubtedly he would not. The great seal is the

organ by which the sovereign speaks his will. An act of parliament, passed by authority of commission issued under it, must be received as a part of the statute law of the land." Having thus explained the intended mode of proceeding, as well as the principle on which it was founded, Lord Camden added, that when the *bill* appointing a regent should have gone through all its forms, it would become necessary to affix the great seal to a second commission, giving the royal assent to such a *bill*. He concluded by moving, that "it is expedient and necessary to issue a proper commission for opening the parliament under the great seal." The Duke of York, who was present, in few words protested against the whole system; but, in particular, against the measure proposed, as unconstitutional and illegal. "I therefore request," added he, "that *my* name may be left out of the commission; and I am authorized to express a similar desire on the part of the Prince of Wales." Rising in his turn, the Duke of Cumberland intimated the same wish, both for himself, and for his brother the Duke of Gloucester.

Severe indisposition having prevented both the chancellor and Lord Loughborough from attending in their places on that evening, Lord Stormont replied to the arguments of Earl Camden. "We might," said he, "my lords, have appointed

a regent full six weeks ago, if the discussion of the question of *right* had not been obtruded on us. With respect to the two commissions intended to be issued under the great seal, the first is informal, the second is illegal. It has been asserted that necessity warrants the mode of proceeding, and that necessity justifies it. I subscribe to the doctrine, but I deny its application in the present instance. What impediment has prevented ministers from addressing the Prince of Wales, to take upon him the exercise of the whole legislative authority of the crown?"—"The proceedings of the two houses within the last three months have conduced more to introduce and to sanction republican principles, than all the public acts done in my time. I rail not at republican principles. I know how beautiful they appear in theory; but they are not the less repugnant to the genius of our constitution." In the absence of Lord Thurlow, rose Lord Hawkesbury. While a member of the house of commons, he spoke rarely, always with brevity; and since his elevation to the peerage, except on questions connected with trade or manufactures, scarcely had his voice been heard in that assembly. With great force of reason he combated the propositions of Lord Stormont; demonstrated that the measure under consideration was governed by the necessity of the case, without exceeding

it; while he pointed out the total dissimilarity between the Revolution of 1688, when the two houses of parliament addressed the Prince of Orange to assume the sovereign authority on a principle of necessity, and the contrast presented by the present position of affairs. The throne, he observed, was then vacant, and all the functions of government suspended: whereas the throne was now full, the courts of law open, and parliament assembled.

*2nd and 3rd February.*—The debate having terminated without any division, it was moved to report *the resolution* immediately to the house, in order to accelerate its progress, though on a *Saturday*: which being done, the commission for opening the parliament was instantly filled up for the subsequent *Tuesday*, the 3rd of February. A conference with the commons was requested to be held on *Monday*, the 2nd, for the purpose of communicating to them *the resolution*, and desiring their concurrence. It took place accordingly on that day; the whole proceeding of the two houses forming an instance of legislative dispatch probably not to be exceeded in the British parliamentary annals. The conference being ended, and *the resolution* of the upper house read, together with the answers of the Prince of Wales and of the queen to the deputation from both houses, the chancellor of the exchequer proposed to agree with the peers in their *resolution*.

Lord North, who, notwithstanding his want of sight, performed an active part throughout all the debates during the course of the king's malady, warmly attacked the minister on this occasion. Having censured the spirit of distrust and jealousy which pervaded every feature of the proceedings relative to the heir-apparent, Lord North added : " His royal highness's answer must diffuse universal satisfaction. It must even create an agreeable *surprise* throughout the kingdom, and extinguish those false alarms which have been so industriously circulated, that the prince had asserted his *right* to assume the sovereign authority independently of the two houses of parliament."

Pitt was not formed tamely to endure such a reprehension, which he repelled with great promptitude and equal force. " The noble lord," said he, " observes that a general, though false alarm, has been diffused through the country lest the question of *right* should be supported. I deny the truth of his proposition. I allow, indeed, that it was not claimed by the Prince of Wales ; but it was asserted by others. That no person has been bold enough to advise him to assert such a right after the solemn decision of the two houses of parliament, cannot form matter of *surprise*. Even if any man could be found so bold, it is very improbable that a prince of the house of Brunswick would follow such advice. I

readily admit that his royal highness's acceptance of the regency will furnish subject of *joy* to the people, but not that it can prove a matter of *surprise*. They will not be disposed to censure parliament for reprobating unconstitutional doctrines, started by men who now lament their own assertions, which they are ashamed to avow, and seem desirous to retract."

If Lord North's observations had roused Pitt, the pointed sarcasms of the latter against Fox irritated Burke almost to a degree of madness. "I assert," exclaimed he, "that the Prince of Wales's *right* to the regency is as clear as the sun; and that it is the duty of this house to appoint him regent, with the full powers of sovereignty. His royal highness's *right* is founded in law, in justice, and in equity." Then bursting into one of his grand and eccentric appeals to the fancy, "The minister's plan," continued he, "merits a worse name than to be called a *phantom*. Ministers are preparing to create the monster of Sin and Death described by Milton: death to the constitution, sin to the feelings of the country. They are giving birth to innumerable barking monsters, eager to destroy every principle of our constitution. They are about to purloin the great seal, to commit an act of forgery and of fraud, to support violence, and to consummate their climax of villainy. Their delays keep pace

with every other part of their system. How unlike the convention parliament in 1688, who completed all their objects of national benefit between the 26th of December and the 12th of the ensuing month, finishing the whole work in sixteen days!"—"I contend that the house has no right to authorize the lord chancellor to put the great seal to forgery, thus giving it the form of royal authority instead of the substance. Such violations of law are delusions. They are only the sweepings of the cobwebs of Westminster Hall; the smoke of the dish, not its nourishment."

With more temper, Sheridan denied that Fox had ever maintained the prince's right to assume the exercise of the royal authority without the adjudication of the two houses of parliament. "The question of *right* was therefore," added he, "unnecessarily agitated, because the right of the two houses to provide for the defect in the exercise of the sovereign power never was contested."

Powis sustained Burke's opinions. "In order," said he, "to open a parliament, there must exist a person competent to authorize the act; either the king himself, or his representative. In the present case, there can be neither; and the place will be filled by a fictitious, imaginary phantom." *The resolution* to agree with the lords being nevertheless carried without any division, a *motion* was made and voted, to request another conference



with that house. Before the adjournment took place, Pitt, in answer to a question made from the opposition bench, demanding "what measure was next to ensue," explained, in the most explicit terms, his intentions. "I trust," said he, "that we may carry up the *resolution* to the conference early on *this very day*. The commission being ready sealed, parliament may be opened forthwith; and as soon as we are returned, I shall instantly move for leave to bring in a *bill* for appointing a regent, founded on those *resolutions*."

*3rd February.*—The time was now arrived when the two houses, who had hitherto acted as a convention, were to assume the *form* of a parliament assembled according to the established usages of the constitution. Every impediment and delay, which during nearly two months had prevented a change of administration, being at length removed; new ministers, together with a new order of things, might be speedily and confidently expected. Pitt, who had so long, and with so much general approbation, occupied the first place in the state, beheld in prospect a private station: while Fox, twice driven by his own errors from the cabinet, prepared to re-enter it under better auspices. The queen, selected by parliament not only to have the custody of the king's person, but the control of the whole royal household, was about to be invested with extensive power, pa-

tronage, and influence. Among all the legislative dispositions made by Pitt for conducting the government during his majesty's incapacity, the wisdom, as well as the necessity, of thus arming the queen with a degree of independent authority in the state might appear the most doubtful. I am nevertheless of opinion, that her good sense, experience, moderation, and the strong maternal affection which animated her throughout her whole life towards her eldest son,—an affection amounting to predilection, and which he as warmly returned,—would have secured the country from any personal collision between them. Mary of Medicis was a violent, implacable, weak, misguided woman, destitute of attachment to Louis the Thirteenth, the most unamiable of princes; who had likewise imbibed an early conviction that she was not wholly unacquainted with his father's assassination. There could not, therefore, exist the slightest degree of real analogy between the two cases, though Lord Stormont had recently compared them. Yet, if we consider how much power corrupts the heart, and how much party inflames the passions, we shall probably think it equally fortunate for herself, and for the nation, that she should not have been placed in a situation so trying to human nature.

Among the political caricatures which appeared in the shops of the capital about this time, was a

print representing the chancellor, Pitt, and Dundas, in the characters of the "three weird sisters," wildly but characteristically attired, standing on a heath, intently gazing on the full moon. Her orb appeared half enlightened, half eclipsed. The part averted, which remained in darkness, contained the king's profile. On the other side, resplendent with light, and graciously regarding the three gazers, was portrayed a head of the queen. The circumstance of Dundas being thus ranked with Pitt and Thurlow sufficiently indicates the degree of political consideration which he attracted, and how much higher he stood in the public estimation, as a man possessed of power or influence, than any of the remaining cabinet ministers. He was, in fact, far superior to either of the secretaries of state in real weight and consequence. So certain, and so imminent, appeared the Prince of Wales's appointment to the regency during the first days of February, that medals were struck and sold commemorating the event. One of them, which I purchased at the time, lies now before me. It is of mean execution, presenting no favourable specimen of the arts in that line. The size is between a shilling and a half-crown piece; the composition, a base metal, designed to imitate silver. On one side appears his royal highness's side face, the hair dressed in small curls, as then worn; which might

easily be mistaken for a tie-wig, loosely floating down his back. The resemblance of his countenance is bad and vulgar. He wears a coat embroidered at the button-holes, a part of his *star* just appearing; with a prodigious *jabot* or frill of lace at the breast. Such was the costume of that time. Round it is this legend or inscription :

“ PRINCE REGENT OF GREAT BRITAIN, FRANCE, AND  
IRELAND,” ETC.

On the reverse are engraven the *ostrich plumes* of the Princes of Wales, with the “ *Ich dien* ” on a label, surrounded by the words,

“ BORN AUGUST 12, 1762.  
APPOINTED FEB. 1789.”

This medal, struck in order to perpetuate a fact which never was realized, is now probably become very rare.

Carlton House, to which residence the destinies of Great Britain were apparently about to be transferred from St. James's, presented in its interior, during the first days of February, as may well be supposed, a scene of political intrigue and contending interests. The place of first lord of the treasury was of course reserved for the Duke of Portland; but relative to the office of chancellor of the exchequer, and its future possessor, there prevailed much uncertainty. Lord John Cavendish had indeed been named to it by the public voice, though he neither emulated to re-

sume that situation, nor in truth were his talents, either financial or parliamentary, adequate to conduct it with becoming dignity and credit to himself. Common report asserted that Sheridan aspired to fill it, the prince approving and supporting his pretension. Absurd or improbable as such a story may appear, many circumstances conduced to diminish its incredibility. During Fox's absence and Lord Loughborough's indisposition, Sheridan occupied a very high, if not the first rank in his royal highness's confidence and councils. Nor ought we to wonder at the fact. His talents, as a member of the house of commons, yielded to none within those walls. I believe, Pitt stood more in awe of them, if he could be said to stand in awe of any thing, than he did of Fox himself. Sheridan moreover possessed other qualities not less calculated to acquire the favour of the heir-apparent. His convivial powers rendered him equally delightful in society, as his vast intellectual endowments qualified him to shine in parliament, or in the cabinet. Fox's predominant passion, to which he had devoted his youth and sacrificed his fortune, was play. Sheridan supremely loved wine, of which he swallowed vast quantities: a recommendation of no common order in the court and at the table of a prince who in *that* respect emulated the younger Cyrus, if in no *other* feature of his character. Neither Lord Rawdon, who

deservedly stood high in his royal highness's personal regard — nor Grey, nor Windham, nor Erskine, though all partaking of his confidence, and frequently the companions of his private hours, were able to maintain a conflict over the bottle with an antagonist like Sheridan. His face, even at this period of his life, when he had not long completed his thirty-seventh year, began to exhibit eloquent proofs of his intemperance.

But there still remained a third cause of the ascendant which Sheridan exercised at Carlton House. I mean, the prominent part that he had always taken in defence of Mrs. Fitzherbert's interests, honour, and character. When Fox came forward in the house of commons to disavow and to deny from authority, in the most formal terms, the asserted matrimonial ceremony between her and the heir-apparent, we have seen that Sheridan contrived, without contradicting his friend, to do away in a great degree the effect of his assurances. The words chosen by Sheridan on the occasion were admirably calculated to throw a mysterious veil over the transaction, and to give it a sort of sanctity ; while he paid the highest testimonies to the distinguished merits of the lady herself. She still continued to enjoy the first place in the prince's affections, and her future destiny formed at this time an object of general curiosity. What would she *become*, it was asked, under the ap-

proaching regency? Many persons believed, that as soon as the restrictions should be taken off, a very high rank of the peerage would be immediately conferred on her. But though George the First made one of his two mistresses Duchess of Kendal — the other, Countess of Darlington; and though George the Second imitated his father's example, by creating Madame de Walmoden, Countess of Yarmouth for her life;—yet I doubt whether any minister in 1789 would have advised or sanctioned the adoption by the regent of a similar measure.

Sheridan's want of high birth and connexions could not of itself form an insurmountable impediment to his being placed at the head of the exchequer, if there had existed no greater obstacle. Have we not, in fact, beheld a provincial physician's son, of very moderate abilities, raised, in 1801, to the post of first minister; presiding over both the treasury and the exchequer, during more than three years? Canning's descent, who has so ably filled, and continues at this hour to fill, cabinet offices, was not more illustrious than that of Sheridan, which produced, during three successive generations, men of eminent talents. Nor could Sheridan's want of property have excluded him, since Pitt, as well as Fox, shared with him that defect. But among *us*, morals, no less than talents, are indispensable to ensure political elevation!

*3rd—6th February.*—The month of January had expired under the most gloomy presages respecting the king's restoration to reason. Having remained more than three months in a state of total alienation of mind—or rather, of decided lunacy,—the daily reports issued by the medical attendants, which at first were eagerly read, no longer excited the same emotions. Varying little from one day to another in their nature and contents, they ceased to awaken any lively hope, or almost to inspire strong curiosity. All the delays that had hitherto impeded the formation of a regency being at length surmounted, men of every description looked forward to the transfer of the sceptre from George the Third to the hands of his son; when, to the astonishment of all, to the joy of the bulk of the nation, but to the unspeakable disappointment of many individuals, a salutary change began to manifest itself in the disorder. It commenced early in February, advancing progressively with the month, and indicating an imperfect return or resumption of reason. One of the first symptoms that he gave of it happened in the following manner. Either on the 4th or 5th of February, a friend of mine, Mr. Robert Greville, brother of the late Earl of Warwick, then one of his majesty's equerries, and in waiting at the time, happened to be standing near the king's bed at Kew, engaged in conversation with Dr. Willis. Both



of them were unprepared for, and unapprehensive of, his either listening to or understanding their discourse. Greville observed to Willis, that Lord North had made many enquiries after his majesty's health. "Has he?" said the king. "Where did he make them? At St. James's, or here?" On their replying to his question, "Lord North," said he, "is a good man, unlike the others. He is a good man."—The king formed a perfectly just estimate of Lord North. Party and politics had driven him to take refuge under the shield of *the coalition*; but an early and deep-rooted affection for his old master survived in his bosom. Throughout the whole progress of the royal disorder, Burke, on the contrary, displayed little concern or sympathy for him; but much indecorous impatience to arrive at power.

The commons having met on the 3rd of February, and agreed to *the resolution* of the lords, a message was sent down from the upper house, desiring their attendance at the act of reading the commission. Lord Bathurst, as the representative of the chancellor, who was still absent from indisposition, briefly stated the causes of convoking parliament. Every form incident to opening the session in the accustomed manner having been observed, as soon as the Speaker and the members present were returned from the bar of the lords, Pitt moved for leave to bring in a *bill* consonant

to the purposes enumerated by Lord Bathurst. No objection being made, he introduced it on the 5th, when it was read a first time, with little other interruption than a few indignant comments from Burke : but upon the subsequent evening, that extraordinary man unlocked all the stores of his eloquence to oppose its further progress. “The duration of his majesty’s malady,” said Burke, “lies hidden in the secret recesses of the dispensations of Providence. He is insane ; but his disease is not intermittent ; nor has it any lucid intervals, and partial visitations of reason. *His faculties are totally eclipsed. Not a partial, but a total and entire eclipse.* The present bill is indefinite in its duration ; because that bold promiser, Dr. Willis himself, cannot venture to fix a time when the king may be able to resume his functions. And as he, whose temerity would impel him to decide on that point if the thing were possible, does not hazard an opinion on it, we may well presume that physicians of cooler judgment will not even pronounce a conjecture on the subject.”

“The bill,” continued Burke, “is intended not only to degrade the prince, but the whole Brunswick family ; who are to be outlawed and attainted, as having forfeited all claim to the confidence of the country. This house is now scattering the seeds of future dissensions in the royal

family, verging to treasons; for the perpetration of which acts, public justice will one day overtake and bring ministers to trial. According to the provisions of the bill, as it is drawn up, until the queen shall think proper to assert that the king is recovered, the people possess no means of knowing the fact. If, therefore, *her council* should declare it, and that his majesty shall be able to sit in a chair at the head of that council, *the bill* provides that he shall be declared capable. What is this enactment, except putting into the hands of Dr. Willis and his keepers the whole power of changing the government! A person who has been insane may be so subdued by coercion as to become capable of submitting to act the farce appointed, and of appearing for a short period to have resumed his intellects. I maintain the utter impossibility of adducing proof, whether a person who has been insane is perfectly recovered or not. The whole business is a scheme, under the pretence of pronouncing his majesty recovered, to bring back an insane king."

However indecorous and censurable some passages of this speech may appear, and whatever condemnation they excited at the time when they were pronounced, yet Burke's observations were not destitute of justice. If the king's restoration of reason had proved partial and temporary, instead of complete, many of the predicted or sup-

posed evils might have been realized. Happily, in 1789 his recovery was rapid and total. So was it in 1801. But, throughout the whole spring of 1811, I know that he floated between sanity and insanity, till finally his mind seemed to become effete and extinct. Fortunately, his eldest son, then instructed by time and the progress of events, allowed the existing frame of government to remain untouched; as he unquestionably ought to have done in 1789, till the probable event of the king's malady could have been ascertained. Burke concluded by again alluding to the position of the queen. "I do not suspect her," observed he, "of ever intentionally acting with impropriety. But situations and temptations may pervert the purest mind, and draw it aside from the path of rectitude. This house, proceeding step after step, has imperceptibly been led on to commit acts, which, if they had been proposed at once, would have been rejected by every man of principle. Like Macbeth, who, after having murdered Duncan and Banquo, exclaims,

————— 'I am in blood

Stept in so far, that should I wade no more,

Returning were as tedious as go o'er ;'

so *they* find themselves inclined to proceed, from a want of courage to retrace their steps." No fact can more forcibly prove the degree of unpopularity to which Burke had sunk at this period, than

the circumstance of a speech containing matter so impressive, and so much calculated to awaken deep reflections in the minds of his hearers, eliciting no reply. Not a word of answer was made to it, either by Pitt, or by any member of administration.

*9th February.*—Already the king began to exhibit unequivocal symptoms of returning reason; information of which fact, however guardedly expressed it might be in the medical reports, yet becoming rapidly diffused throughout society, contributed to sustain the administration. All coercion of his person having long been withdrawn, as early as the 4th of February his majesty not only shaved his beard, but part of his head; Willis being present during the operation. His body seemed to sympathize with his mind, and to aid its restoration; an abscess forming in his neck, which suppurated, and afforded relief. Ever since the last week of January he had been allowed, as often as the weather permitted, to walk out in the royal gardens of Kew, or of Richmond, accompanied by Dr. Willis, and one of that physician's sons. Though much emaciated in consequence of his confinement, together with the medical treatment that he had undergone, he was capable of great exercise and exertion. Not only the queen, but the princess royal was brought into his apartment of evenings, and remained

with him a considerable time. Notwithstanding, however, these apparently favourable indications, as no reliance could yet be placed on their continuance, the parliamentary proceedings advanced; and it was supposed that the lapse of a few days must place his royal highness in the regent's chair. Each side of the house of commons seemed alike emulous to expedite the progress of the *bill* by which he was to be invested with that office. But impediments to dispatch arose at every step. Divisions even occasionally occurred on particular regulations, in which ministers were usually supported by a majority fluctuating between fifty and sixty. The clause giving to the queen a power over part of the privy purse, and locking up the remainder, being carried by fifty-five votes, a most obstinately contested debate followed on the next enactment, which vested in her majesty the care of the king's person, and the government of the household. Against so vast an accession of strength in that quarter the opposition concentrated all their force.

Lord North demanded of Pitt if he was fully aware of the parliamentary influence which it must confer. "Eighteen peers," continued he, "belong to the household. Do gentlemen consider that eighteen peers voting on one side, make the difference of thirty-six on a division?" It was stated, without receiving any contradiction

from the treasury bench, that the number of officers in the royal household amounted to nearly one hundred and fifty; whose places were respectively worth from sixty, up to eighteen hundred pounds a year. Powis reprobated the measure, and Marsham maintained that the aggregate number of members of the two houses holding employments, either in the king's or in the queen's household, approached nearer sixty than thirty. Sheridan was most pointed in his observations on Pitt's avowed intention to propose a new establishment for the regent. "How does he dare," asked Sheridan, "to suggest such an idea, after having heard the declaration made from authority, that the prince desires to have no such establishment created as must occasion fresh burthens on the people? Does he not mean to leave his royal highness the power of exercising his own free will upon the point? The minister must possess a pretty considerable share of presumption, who can take it for granted that his majesty, whenever he recovers, will be pleased to hear of a new and unnecessary tax having been imposed on his subjects for such a purpose, in addition to their present heavy load."

All these attacks were nevertheless conducted with some degree of temper. But Burke, whose impatience to attain possession of office and whose irritable formation of mind led him to

spurn the ordinary restraints of prudence, let loose his indignation on the chancellor of the exchequer. "He demands," exclaimed Burke, "whether we would strip the king of every mark of royalty, and transfer them to the regent? No! Heaven forbid, while the person wearing the crown can lend a grace to those dignities, and derive a lustre from the splendour of his household! But have we forgotten that we are debating relative to a monarch smitten by the hand of Omnipotence? Do we recollect that the *Almighty has hurled him from his throne*, and plunged him into a condition that may justly excite the pity of the meanest peasant in his dominions!"—Expressions so indecorous exciting very general disapprobation, and a loud cry arising from the ministerial ranks, of "Take down his words;" the Marquis of Graham, who was seated near Pitt on the treasury bench, started up, and declared that "no individual within those walls should dare to assert that *the king was hurled from his throne*." A scene of great clamour and disorder occurred during some moments, Burke vainly attempting to obtain a patient audience. No sooner had he, however, surmounted the tumult, than, without displaying any embarrassment, he assured the house that he would give them a full opportunity to take down his words. "I was interrupted," continued he, "in the mid-



dle of a sentence; and Scripture itself, so mangled, may be rendered blasphemy. But when in our very churches it is asserted that the king is afflicted for our national sins, shall I not be permitted to say that he is struck by the hand of God? What! when we are putting up prayers for the restoration of his intellect, and declaring that it is in punishment of our iniquities the sovereign is deprived of reason, shall I not be allowed to assert that Omnipotence has smitten him? His illness is caused by no act of ours. But ought we, in this his hour of sickness and calamity, to cloathe his bed with purple, to make a mockery of him, to put on his head a crown of thorns, to place a reed in his hand, to array him in royal robes, and to cry, ‘Hail! King of the British!’”

This elegant and ingenious apology, cloathed in the language of Scripture, which, with the single exception perhaps of Erskine, Burke alone could have applied with so much felicity and promptitude to the case, produced its full effect. He improved it to inveigh with equal force, but in less intemperate terms, against other features of the *bill*. “How,” demanded he, “will the king be pleased, on his recovery, at finding the patronage of the household transferred from his son and representative to the queen? He must be shocked at such an act, unless on the mon-

strous supposition that his majesty is a good husband and a bad father. The royal family are in fact totally excluded from the present measure, while power of an enormous description is withdrawn from the king's eldest son, and vested in a person not of his majesty's blood. No one grateful function is left to the regent which may balance the dreadful attributes of sovereignty. He can make no peers. He can grant neither pensions nor offices. He can exercise no charities. We are about to confer on him a mock crown, a tinsel robe, and a lackered sceptre."

"In former times," continued Burke, "the road to popularity was by upholding the liberties of the people. The chancellor of the exchequer is born for the age in which he lives. He takes another path. The present *bill* is contrived to fortify himself when out of office. His majesty may continue insane for twenty years. And in such case, what a state of anarchy are we creating, when we thus set up a divided government!" Highly coloured as were some parts of this picture, it must be admitted that there was truth, as well as talent, in its composition. If the king's recovery had been delayed, or had only been doubtful in its nature, a struggle for power would have ensued between Pitt and Fox; between the regent and the queen; which was obviated by his prompt resumption of the reins of government. She-

ridan having moved a clause limiting her majesty's control over the officers of the household "to such as should be deemed necessary for attending about the king's person," ministers carried the question again by the same majority as the preceding,—namely, fifty-five votes.

*10th February.*—On the subsequent evening, the minister proceeded to name the eight individuals whom he proposed to form her majesty's council. The Archbishops of Canterbury and York, together with Lords Thurlow and Kenyon, as the two chiefs of the law, naturally occupied the first place. Pitt joined with these dignitaries of the church and the bar, the four heads of the departments constituting the royal household; namely, the lord steward, and lord chamberlain; the master of the horse, and the groom of the stole. Lord North, who from his anxiety to supply the void occasioned by Fox's absence took part in every discussion, immediately intimated his intention of moving to insert the names of the princes of the blood, being of full age, his majesty's sons; as well as those of the Dukes of Gloucester and of Cumberland, his brothers. Other eminent public functionaries were pointed out likewise from different quarters of the house, as proper for the same distinction. Sheridan ingeniously treated the ministerial proposition of excluding the princes of the blood as unnatural;

“because parliament became thereby the instrument of infusing into her majesty’s mind a suspicion that her sons were not proper persons to advise her, which was an outrage on the feelings of nature.” The eight names enumerated by Pitt having been severally carried without any division, Lord North then moved, that “the Duke of York be a member of the council.” It was opposed, not only by the chancellor of the exchequer, but by Addington, then scarcely known as member for Devizes; destined nevertheless within two years to fill the Speaker’s chair, and within twelve, to succeed Pitt himself at the head of the treasury and the exchequer:—one of the most extraordinary political transmutations which we have witnessed in our time!

The minister resisted the Duke of York’s nomination on those general principles in conformity to which it had been thought improper to allow the Prince of Wales any concern in the care of his majesty’s person. If therefore the eldest son was excluded, respect to *him* made it necessary to extend the same rule to the rest of the royal family. Such a respect, Burke observed, operated as a perpetual disqualification, like the respect manifested by the followers of Epicurus for their gods. Lord North reprobated it as “a barbarous principle pushed to a barbarous extent:” while Lord Maitland exclaimed with his characteristic

energy of voice and manner, that "it was not a disrespect, but an insult to the king, to the queen, and to the Prince of Wales." Burke treated the idea as revolting to humanity. "I am myself a father," said he. "So is the noble lord in the blue ribband. How should we feel, on recovering from a malady such as the present, to find that our sons had been precluded from all share in the custody of our persons! I should regard as a murderer the man who had debarred my son all access to me." Denunciations so violent produced no effect on Pitt; and when a division took place, Lord North's *motion* was rejected, though only by forty-eight votes. The Duke of Gloucester, when proposed, had against him forty-nine. It was not attempted to divide the house on the Duke of Cumberland. The two brothers had acted, indeed, a widely different part throughout the whole period of the sovereign's illness. While the latter, as well as the Duchess of Cumberland, approved themselves devoted partizans of the heir-apparent, and avowedly canvassed for him, the Duke of Gloucester withdrew in a great measure from society. Secluded from politics and pleasures, he absented himself equally from the house of peers, and seemed deeply to feel the calamity which obscured the throne.

During these parliamentary proceedings, Carlton House presented a scene of extraordinary agi-

tation. His majesty's progressive advance, not only in bodily health, but in the resumption of his mental faculties, was too steady, regular, and apparent, to remain any longer matter either of doubt or of concealment. Yet Warren, though he admitted a considerable degree of *composure* to have taken place in the king's general deportment and conversation, pertinaciously adhered to his opinion, that no real or permanent amelioration had been operated in his complaint. As Warren stood first in public estimation for medical skill, many persons long accustomed to repose almost unlimited confidence in his professional assertions continued incredulous on the subject. Sir Lucas Pepys, on the other hand, throughout the whole progress of the disorder, had, as I know, entertained a contrary sentiment; and his belief being strengthened by the recent symptoms, he made no secret of his conviction that a speedy and complete recovery would ensue. Information of the circumstance reaching the Prince of Wales, he immediately sent for Pepys, who, on his arrival at Carlton House, being ushered into his royal highness's presence, there found Dr. Warren. A warm expostulation took place between them, though they lived on terms of mutual regard, approaching to friendship. Each reproached the other with deceiving the prince by a false representation of facts. Warren maintained, that how-

ever flattering appearances might be, they would prove fallacious, and that the alienation of mind was incurable. Pepys as stiffly supported the opposite belief. At length the two physicians parted, leaving the prince to form his own judgment on their prognostics. But a few days determined the question in Pepys's favour. Warren's political bias unquestionably obscured his usual discernment. All these particulars were related to me by Sir Lucas Pepys himself, within a week after the time when they happened.

11th February.—A publication took place at this juncture, which, however undeserving of serious commemoration it may seem, yet threw no ordinary degree of ridicule on the prince's cause and followers. Hume, the most philosophic historian of the last century, though by no means the most impartial, has thought even a *song* deserving mention among the events of a reign. He says, when enumerating the particulars which conduced, in December 1688, to produce the flight of James the Second, "It may not be unworthy of notice, that a merry *ballad*, called *Lillibullero*, being at this time published in derision of the papists and the Irish, it was greedily received by the people; and was sung by all ranks of men, even by the king's army, who were strongly seized with the national spirit. This incident both discovered and served to encrease the general discontent of

the kingdom." So happened it in some degree on the present occasion. Among the individuals who filled an important place in the interior of Carlton House, in February 1789, was Weltjee. He occupied (not the post held by *Bonneau* in the court of Charles the Seventh, king of France, respecting which office Voltaire says,

" Il eut l'emploi qui certes n'est pas mince,  
Et qu'à la cour, où tout se peint en beau,  
Nous appellons être l'ami du prince ;"

but ) the charge of comptroller of the kitchen and cellars of that royal residence ; an employment that demanded great gastronomic talents. Weltjee was a German of no ordinary bodily dimensions, not distinguished by the humility of his deportment or manners, and fully impressed with the importance of his post. Though he had resided some years in England, he spoke no language except a barbarous Anglo-Westphalian jargon, which generally provoked laughter. Nor was his English orthography more correct than his enunciation. But amidst his attention to the tastes of his royal highness, Weltjee had not been oblivious of his own personal interests.

On the 7th of February died Sir Thomas Halifax, a city knight, one of the representatives for the borough of Aylesbury. It was imagined that Colonel Gerard Lake, who then filled the situation about the prince of first equerry and commissioner



of the stables, and whose distinguished military services in India have since raised him to the rank of a British viscount, would have started for the vacancy. I believe in point of fact he did offer himself, but without success; though at the general election in 1790 he was chosen one of the members for Aylesbury.

A very few days after Halifax's decease, a printed letter, addressed to the freeholders of that borough, signed "W. Velshie," was circulated at the west end of the town. Its contents could not be perused by the most splenetic man with a grave countenance. I copy the original as it now lies on my table.

"To de Gendelmen, de Abbès, and de Freholders  
of de Comtè of Ailsbri.

"My frind Gerri Lake havin offurd his sarvis's. to reprepresent you in parliament, I presum to tak de friddom to recummind um to you, bein my frind, and grate frind of my master de Prince. He is ver clever gendelmen, and kno de horse ver vell, how to bi for de Prince, and how to sel for himselv. But if you tink him two poor, and send him to de divl, I beg to offer miselv on his intrist, havin got plenti of munny in de honorable stasion I holds undur de Prince. I am naturalise Inglisman and Wig, and was introduce to de Wig Club by Lord Stormant and Jak Payne.

Mi public sentimints are dat I vil give you ver good dinnurs and plenti of munni, if you vil lect me your representatative. My frinds and connuxions are de Duk of Qinsbri, Lord Lodian, Lord Luffbro, Lord Malmsbri, Lord Clurmunt, Lord Cartrit, Sheridan, Gerri Lake, Jak Payne, Geo. Hangre, Burke, Singel Spiet Hambledon, Eglintown, Master Lee, Trevis de Jew, yong Gray, all de Convays, Harri Standup, Tarletun, and Tom Stepni. My principles are God dam de King and de Quin, de Pitt, and de Rustricsuns; and God bles de Prince and all his broders, and de Duk de Cumberland. I say agen and agen dat de Prince be our lawful suvring, and not his fader.

“ I am, gendelmen,

“ Your frind and sarvant,

“ W. VELSHIE.”

The universally reputed author of this ludicrous production was the present Earl Onslow, then eldest son of Lord Onslow, commonly called in society Tom Onslow. He represented at the time the borough of Guildford. In his person he was low, rather indeed beneath the middle stature, and destitute of any elegance or grace: most fluent in discourse, his words and ideas always seeming to press for utterance. His education had corresponded with his birth: the great

compositions of antiquity were familiar to him; and he possessed an infinity of wit, if unfortunately it had not too frequently degenerated into buffoonery. Even then, he was often classical, though not always decorous. Yet her majesty, and the princesses her daughters, delighted in his society, seeming to enjoy his most eccentric flights of humour, fancy, and mimicry. They were peculiar to himself, baffling all attempt at description. In order to spare the eye, though he might sometimes wound the ear, he usually performed them behind a screen. His predominant passion was driving *four in hand*. He passed the whole day in his phaeton, and sacrificed every object to the gratification of that "ignoble ambition," as he himself called it when speaking to me on the subject. Nevertheless, while holding the reins and exercising the whip in Piccadilly, his mind was not inactive. If by accident we met, he would sometimes stop, descend from the phaeton, and entreat me to listen to a lampoon, or a couplet which he had just composed: he had in fact a poetic vein, though the stream was shallow. Voluble as he appeared to be in conversation, and abounding with ideas, he possessed no political talent; and I believe he never made an attempt to rise in either house of parliament, where the name of Onslow would have secured him a fa-

vourable hearing, at least in one house. On himself, not less than on his acquaintance, he exercised his satire, sparing neither his own defects of mind nor of person. I have already observed that he scarcely attained to middle height. Driving, on a certain day, to the Custom-house in his phaeton, while remaining on the quays, a *crane* which was employed in landing goods, in swinging round, caught his carriage, and had nearly lifted it from the ground, driver, horses, and all. Onslow, who was an expert coachman, disengaged himself after some time, not without difficulty, from his perilous situation. "Now," exclaimed he, "I can believe in the accounts transmitted to us of the battle between the *pigmies* and the *cranes*."

Among the eminent individuals enumerated in "Weltjee's address to the electors of Aylesbury," many have been already mentioned in the course of these memoirs. Indeed, with the exception of three,—namely, the Earl of Eglington, Mr. Lee, and Travis,—I personally knew, in a greater or less degree, all the others. I have elsewhere spoken of the late Admiral Payne, one of the most honest, honourable, and attached servants of the Prince of Wales. Lord Carteret still survives in 1821, at a very advanced age. Having been raised to the peerage by Pitt in 1784, and holding at the time of his majesty's

malady the office of joint postmaster-general, his defection in joining the prince's party excited much surprize, while it cost him his place. The Honourable George Hanger, now become an Irish baron in his old age by the successive decease of his two brothers, the Lords Coleraine, might rather be considered as a humble retainer of Carlton House than justly numbered among the friends of the heir-apparent. Poor even to a degree of destitution, without profession or regular employment, subsisting from day to day by expedients, some of them not the most reputable, he was regarded as a sort of outcast from decent society. Yet he did not altogether want a degree of eccentric talent. Like myself, he is an author, having published, nearly twenty years ago, his "Life, Adventures, and Opinions;" a work in which, together with much absurdity, may be found some curious facts and anecdotes of his own time. Sir Thomas Stepney, who has succeeded to the title, but without the estate, of his elder brother, and my friend, the late Sir John, belonged to the Duke of York, not to the Prince of Wales. In the Duke's family, Stepney has held for a quarter of a century, and still continues at the present hour to fill, the post of groom of the bedchamber. Tarleton, distinguished in his youth, on the other side of the Atlantic, as a brave and enterprizing partizan during the course

of the American war, the Trenck of our time, has been since known in parliament, through many sessions, as member for Liverpool.

Notwithstanding the rapidity with which the *Regency Bill* had advanced through the house of commons, yet one great, delicate, and most important provision still remained for regulation. I mean, the mode and form by which his majesty should be enabled, on his mental recovery, to resume the monarchical power. It formed a point of extraordinary difficulty for legislation. Pitt, with his usual masterly compression of ideas, stated his proposition to the house; enabling the queen, whenever she and *five of her council* should consider the king to be restored to sanity of mind, immediately to convoke the *privy council*, as far as any number not less than *nine*. If *six* of the latter body should coincide in opinion that his majesty's disorder no longer existed, they were authorized and bound to countersign the proclamation informing the public of his recovery. A copy of this instrument was ordered to be immediately transmitted to the lord mayor of London, and to be printed in the Gazette; parliament being totally precluded from exercising any interference or participation throughout the whole transaction. Such was the minister's plan, which he justified by strong, plausible, and solid reasons. "The king possesses," said Pitt, "an undoubted

right to resume the personal exercise of the royal authority as soon as he has recovered his reason. That fact must be notified through some ostensible channel. Privy counsellors, responsible for their advice, would form the proper mode of communicating the event to the country; which notification would instantly terminate the regency. The queen and *her* council having stated it to the president of *the* council, then, on the king's requisition under his sign manual, the privy council being assembled, are bound to countersign the royal proclamation calling on parliament to meet without delay. In consequence of such precautions, I conceive it to be impossible that a resumption can take place under doubtful or equivocal circumstances."

Wise, able, and commensurate with the evil, as this measure may perhaps appear to posterity, it excited the general, unqualified indignation of the chiefs of opposition. Powis stigmatized it by the epithets of "incongruous, unprecedented, and unconstitutional: an attempt to supersede the rights of parliament, transferring them to a hacknied and garbled junto." Marsham reiterated all these accusations. Francis observed how easy it was to prove beyond dispute the *existence* of insanity, but how difficult to demonstrate the fact of a real and complete *recovery*. "Yet parliament," continued he, "having thought

it indispensable to establish the king's incapacity to the satisfaction of the whole country, was now called on to refer the question of his resumption to an inferior tribunal." Sheridan pointing these remarks against the minister with his accustomed talent, Dundas came forward to Pitt's support. "The proposition," said he, "submitted to the house, is for enabling the king, on his recovery, to meet his parliament in his own right as sovereign. On the contrary, the alternative held out would humiliate him to the character of a suppliant for his throne, while he must witness his authority exercised by a regent. But there still remains an additional check, and which I by no means regard as feeble in its operation. It is the pause allowed to his majesty, during which he may exercise his philosophy and his religion, by revolving deeply his situation, previous to issuing the proclamation which will say to his people, *I am again your king*. Can it be suffered, that when he is recovered, the regent appointed to exercise his functions shall come down to parliament with the pomp of royalty, while the sovereign is compelled to remain a spectator of the show from the windows of Buckingham House? I believe this assembly and the country will equally revolt at such a proposition."

It was not till towards the close of the debate that Burke attempted to take part in the dis-



cussion: nor, such was his unpopularity, did he succeed without considerable difficulty. "We have been asked," observed he, "from the treasury bench, whether we would wish to see the king a suppliant to parliament for his throne? I reply, Yes; I consider parliament as the proper judge of kings, and it is necessary that they should be amenable to it. But I do not wish him to be a suppliant to his own menial servants who eat his bread, and receive his wages."—"The first indispensable preliminary to his majesty's resumption of the royal authority, is that *the sanity should not be doubtful*. It would form matter of awful responsibility, to bring forward the person of a monarch who might become the tool of a faction. The disorder with which he is visited resembles a vast sea that has rolled in, and then at a low tide has rolled back, leaving a *bold and barren shore*. I have visited the dreadful abodes in which are confined these unfortunate beings. An author of no ordinary authority, when describing the uncertainty of the symptoms that indicate sanity, declares that many of the patients who had remained a month after their apparent recovery, before they were pronounced free from all complaint, had relapsed on the very last day previous to their intended liberation. The consequences were of the most disastrous kind. Some of these wretched individuals, after

an assumed restoration of reason, have proceeded to acts of sanguinary violence." Strong marks of disapprobation, with cries of *Order*, issuing from the ministerial benches at this part of his speech, "I wish, Mr. Speaker," resumed Burke, "to observe the utmost delicacy; but delicacy is only a subsidiary virtue, and ought always to be subordinate to truth, where the latter is of paramount importance. Towards the other sex we cannot preserve too much delicacy; yet are there numerous occasions in which it must be sacrificed. Child-birth, more especially where a kingdom is at stake; divorce bills, trials for rapes, proceedings in the ecclesiastical courts;—on all these, a total disregard is necessarily exhibited for delicacy. I readily admit that the king's resumption of power, *if his cure prove effectual and permanent*, will be a most auspicious event; but its effects must be proportionably dreadful should a sudden relapse take place."

I have attempted to state with precision the purport of Burke's observations, as, independent of the curious nature of the subject, it may probably form the last occasion that I shall have to mention that illustrious person in the course of these memoirs. After the debate of the 11th of February, Burke retired from the house of commons, or took no part in the discussions that arose there during a considerable time. Finding

that all his opposition only produced great odium to himself, while the king, contrary to Dr. Warren's predictions, advanced rapidly to the complete resumption of his mental powers, Burke abandoned a theatre on which he could no longer perform a part useful to his friends or to the common cause. In truth, he had incurred, by his line of conduct, severe, but perhaps unjust censure: for it is impossible to deny that a most striking analogy exists between the two cases of Charles the Sixth and of George the Third, as Burke more than once asserted; though the admirable provisions of the British constitution preserved us from experiencing the calamities by which France was desolated under that unhappy reign. Nor did Burke by any means exaggerate the misfortune of a partial restoration of reason, if it had taken place in 1789, as actually happened twenty-two years later, in the spring of 1811. George the Third, during successive weeks, then seemed to have nearly or fully recovered his faculties; and he displayed in his conversations with the ministers the utmost anxiety, as well as impatience, to resume his sceptre. What a collision might—nay, must have arisen between Pitt and Fox, if the king, at the time of which I now treat, had only enjoyed gleams and intervals of sanity! But other circumstances contributed to silence Burke. On the 11th of Fe-

bruary, his majesty's disorder had evidently subsided; and Warren himself, who remained so long incredulous, at length signed upon that day a most favourable *report*. Such progress, indeed, had he made towards a perfect cure, that on the morning of the very day in question, Pitt had been allowed for the first time to visit the sovereign since the beginning of his malady. He went down alone to Kew, was introduced by Dr. Willis, remained with his majesty about fifteen minutes, conversed with him on ordinary topics, of course avoiding political subjects, and found him collected on every point.

Before I take leave of Burke, whose name fills so conspicuous a place in the annals of George the Third during more than thirty years, let us cast a farewell glance on him at this period of his life. Never throughout his splendid parliamentary career,—and splendid it unquestionably was, though passed almost wholly on the opposition bench,—had he sunk so low in popular estimation as in 1789! He no longer contended against a king and a minister engaged in a civil war, which produced annually new disgraces and defeats. On the other hand, Burke felt himself declining in years and in health. His circumstances were very embarrassed: his son, whom he fondly cherished, was destitute of any provision or fortune; and his own temper had become sharpened by long

adversity: while his sanguine expectations of filling the pay-office a third time, under the approaching regency, had become suddenly overclouded. Old age impended, with its infirmities and diseases. From this seemingly hopeless situation he was soon extricated by the French revolution; of which event, and its consequences to Europe, he early took a very different view, and formed a very different estimate, from Fox.

His speeches and literary productions in opposition to the inroads of popular violence, anarchy, and subversion in France, dissolving the ties which had so long united him with Fox, naturally led him over to Pitt. I was present in the house of commons on that evening when Burke, after producing from under his coat the revolutionary dagger, and renouncing all further connexion with his old political friends, crossed to the treasury bench, where he squeezed himself in between Dundas and Pitt. It formed the most interesting and affecting scene that I witnessed during the time that I remained in parliament; Fox weeping throughout the whole transaction, his emotions, as often as he rose to speak, impeding his utterance. Burke, on the contrary, who shifted his place more than once before he finally passed over to the government side of the house, never shed a tear, nor even manifested any sentiment of concern. Abhorrence of the revolutionary doctrines,

as *he* esteemed them, which Fox had professed on different occasions, seemed to have steeled Burke's breast against all impressions or recollections of former times. Indeed, his whole deportment resembled the wild and troubled movements of a man disordered in mind, rather than the sober, reflective determination of a statesman. So great an accession of moral strength to administration was justly appreciated by the sovereign and by the minister. Two pensions, amounting together to three thousand six hundred pounds a year, were bestowed on him, *each for three lives*, as his remuneration. I believe he obtained for them by sale near six-and-thirty thousand pounds. Honours and distinctions followed. Not, indeed, titles or decorations, but the most flattering testimonies of notice and of royal favour. George the Third accompanied him from one end to the other of Windsor Terrace, covering with attentions and expressions of regard the champion of order, monarchy, and good government. Thus secured by the bounty of the crown from pecuniary difficulties, did that distinguished individual shortly afterwards finish his days!

11th—13th *February*.—No attempt to answer Burke was made by any member of administration; but some coarse personal jests or sarcasms on his visits to the receptacles for insane patients, to which he had alluded in his speech, were thrown

out by Sir Richard Hill, from the treasury bench. Sheridan, after observing that as the *bill* was drawn up, the king's recovery would not be notified to parliament in any shape, even though the two houses should be actually assembled when it took place, moved an *amendment* to Pitt's proposition. Its object was to compel the privy council to take care that the instrument announcing his majesty's recovery should be submitted to parliament previous to its transmission to the lord mayor, or its insertion in the Gazette. On a division, government negatived it by a majority of sixty-eight, the respective numbers being 181 and 113. It formed the last effort of opposition against the *bill*, which was read a third time on that night.

Next day, Pulteney moved a clause for limiting to the term of *three years* the provision which imposed restrictions on the regent's power of creating peers. The chancellor of the exchequer, who well appreciated the value of Pulteney's support, not only concurred with him in sentiment, but reiterated, with testimonies of high approbation, all Pulteney's opinions relative to the duration of the restrictions. "I thank Heaven, however," added he, "that I have every day stronger reason to believe his majesty's illness will not be protracted to any distant period!" In fact, on that very morning the *report* of his physicians had pronounced him to be in "a progressive state of amendment."

Sheridan moved, that instead of *three years*, the words "one year" should be inserted in the blank ; but knowing the inutility of dividing the house, he allowed the clause to be filled up with the former term. The *bill* then passed ; and on the 13th of February, Pitt, attended by many of his friends, carried it up to the bar of the house of lords.

13th—18th February.—Fox returned at this time from Bath, as much apparently amended in his health as he was sunk in his expectations of again entering the cabinet. Little more than three weeks earlier, when he left London, the king, according to appearances, seemed to be in an almost hopeless state of lunacy. Before the middle of February, his prompt and complete restoration to sanity of mind was universally as well as confidently anticipated. How often must Fox have deplored his recall from Italy, at a moment when he already touched the land of arts, and was preparing to visit *the three gems of Europe!*—gems which he was never again permitted to see. His whole residence in London had been a "phantasma," injurious to his health, and terminating in disappointment. Already various individuals, either of high rank, or holding offices of trust, or distinguished by the king's personal favour, were admitted to see and converse with him. Moore, archbishop of Canterbury, a dull, but a worthy



and respectable prelate, was among the first; and on the following day, Pitt, together with the new Speaker of the house of commons, had an interview of some length with his majesty. Even the Earl of Chesterfield and the Duke of Richmond were allowed to wait on him: but it was not thought proper to introduce into his presence the Prince of Wales or the Duke of York.

With the chancellor he held long and repeated conversations, Willis being usually, but not invariably, present on these occasions, when only topics of ordinary discourse were agitated. With the queen and his daughters he passed much time. His appetite, sleep, and memory all returned; while his pulse, which had risen to one hundred and twenty pulsations in a minute during the severe accesses of his disorder, fell gradually to its usual standard. He was not left in ignorance that Warren, throughout his whole distemper, had augured ill of his recovery; and that, when the other medical attendants perceived amendment, Warren either did not, or would not, coincide in opinion with them. As early as the 11th of February, when that physician arrived at Kew and entered his apartment, the king held out his arm; adding, "Feel my pulse, Dr. Warren. How does it beat? And how many strokes did it beat three days ago? I think there is some amendment. Is there not?"—Warren admitted it, and fully confirmed

his conviction of the fact by the "bulletin" which he signed on that day : but it was not until the 17th of the month that he certified under his hand the king's being "in a state of *convalescence*."

Meanwhile the house of peers proceeded in the *Regency Bill* with as much dispatch as if the malady had not manifested any symptoms of abatement : but the interest which under opposite circumstances would have attended their deliberations, became much diminished in consequence of the recent change that had taken place at Kew. No debate of importance arose in the early stages of the measure, till the 18th, when Lord Rawdon, after expatiating with force relative to the clauses which conferred on the queen a control over the royal household, moved the limitation of her majesty's authority to such part of the establishment "as should be deemed necessary to attend on the king during his illness." Lord Stormont on this occasion exhibited his accustomed powers of argument and eloquence. "The ministers," said he, "when they institute a feeble government, know not the extent or magnitude of the evils that they originate. I fear not, my lords, an open, bold ambition. But I dread that *dark and secret ambition, which, working under ground and undermining all opposed to it, may cripple the power which it dares not avowedly combat in open day.* The patronage of the household extends over offices

exceeding one hundred thousand pounds a year in value.”—“I have ever understood that *the king* is the fountain of office, as of honour. This *bill* makes *the queen* the fountain of office. But the present administration subvert every barrier of the constitution.”

“It has been observed,” continued Lord Stormont, “that the queen can have no political views. I well know how much she is entitled to veneration. But her advisers, who possess power without responsibility, may misguide her. Artifice and cabal will find their way into her presence:—for I know of no quality in the air of Kew which has power to expel or to remove the vermin that invariably infest courts.”

Lord Hawkesbury, who might possibly find some of the sentiments in this speech calculated to afford him subject of reflection, rose in reply. So did Lord Sydney, who denied that the operation of the *bill* would weaken the new government. “Let us,” exclaimed he, “consider who the regent is! A Prince of Wales of high character, of captivating manners, greatly beloved, and in the flower of youth. The restrictions imposed, it is well known, are only provided for the period of his majesty’s incapacity. Do we recollect the present situation of the sovereign? He has been already declared *convalescent* in a report signed by *Dr. Warren*; and his testimony, I

presume, will not be called in question." A division taking place, Lord Rawdon's amendment was rejected by twenty-three votes, the respective numbers being 89 to 66; and a warm discussion then arose on the question of adjournment. Ministers, anxious to stop further proceedings, at a moment when the king might again be speedily brought forward in his regal capacity, proposed to "report progress:" but the Earl of Carlisle, Lord Stormont, and various other peers, opposed it with the utmost vehemence. When the "*Irish propositions*," said they, "were discussed within these walls, we continued here till *two* in the morning. And are we now, at *half past eight*, to be told of the lateness of the hour? No man who considers the deep importance and urgency of the present business can deny that it calls for dispatch. If therefore ministers postpone it, they must be responsible to their country for the consequences." Notwithstanding these reclamations, an adjournment finally took place.

19th February. — On the following day, it having been determined in cabinet to arrest the further progress of the *Regency Bill* in the upper house, the chancellor took his seat on the woolsack. Then rising before the order could be read for renewing the debate of the preceding evening, he observed that since his majesty had been pronounced by his physicians in a state of *convales-*

*cence*, the accounts of his progressive improvement had almost hourly received confirmation. "The recent intelligence from Kew," continued Lord Thurlow, "is so favourable, that I conceive every individual present will coincide with me in thinking it would be indecent to continue the proceedings in which we are engaged, when the principle of the *bill* itself may probably be completely done away." Having then congratulated the audience and the country on the auspicious opening prospect, he submitted to the peers the propriety of an adjournment until the ensuing Tuesday, the 24th of the month. No opposition whatever was experienced, and only two individuals expressed any opinion on the occasion. The first was Lord Stormont. After protesting that the communication just made gave him the liveliest joy, "Although regencies," added he, "are expedients required by necessity under peculiar exigencies, yet every man must feel how great is the calamity of their existence. With respect to the present *Regency Bill*, I consider it as an aggravation of our national misfortunes. I rejoice therefore, personally, if I should be delivered from the severe duty, which the urgent nature of the case, and that motive alone, could have induced me to undertake. Yet, even under the embarrassing restrictions imposed, I am convinced that the Prince of Wales would have ex-

hibited an earnest of that wisdom and exertion which may be expected from him when in the course of nature he shall ascend the throne. My eyes, it is reasonable to suppose, will be closed long before that day arrives: but there are lords now present who may live to witness it. They, I have no doubt, will experience the benefit, and will acknowledge the truth, of my prediction." We must candidly admit that during eight or nine years the *regent's* administration did not in any degree disgrace Lord Stormont's augury. But what sentence will posterity pass upon the *king*, for his treatment of the unfortunate Caroline of Brunswick, from the instant of his ascending the throne? The second and last person who addressed the house was the Duke of York. Having declared the high satisfaction which he felt at the favourable account given, and his perfect concurrence with the *motion* for adjournment, he subjoined: "I should have derived the greatest pleasure from making the same communication, if I had been enabled to do it from any authentic information. Impressed with the exhilarating reports circulated, I esteemed it my duty yesterday to request admission to his majesty's presence. From reasons which might be considered as justifiable, I was denied that satisfaction. I cannot have had any communication with my royal brother on a subject so unexpectedly agi-

tated ; but the knowledge which I possess of his sentiments enables me to assert, that his gratification at this auspicious intelligence will be, if possible, even higher than my own. It must liberate him from the embarrassments in which he would otherwise have been placed, and which no motive could have impelled or induced him to encounter, except a strong sense of his duty to the country." When the house of commons met on the day ensuing, Pitt, without assigning the slightest reason for his conduct, or giving any explanation whatever, instantly moved an adjournment to the 24th of February. Vyner, affecting surprize at so singular a proceeding when no part of the public business was yet brought forward, added : " I can, nevertheless, imagine the cause ; and if I am well founded in my conjecture, it is a most joyous cause to this house, as well as to the kingdom. Yet I cannot help wishing that we might enjoy the gratification of hearing it stated from the chancellor of the exchequer, in order to be enabled to communicate it with confidence to our constituents." Almost any other minister than Pitt would have made some reply, if not disclosure, in compliance with Vyner's invitation ; but he, on the contrary, entrenching himself in silence, the question of adjournment was put, and carried without one dissentient voice.

*24th February.*— Nor was he more communica-

tive when the house met again, though before that day the king had nearly emancipated himself from all medical attendance. The chancellor, however little distinguished by the general suavity of his manners or temper, acted very differently towards the peers. He thought it proper to premise, before he moved for an adjournment to the 2nd of the ensuing month, that every information received from Kew confirmed the probability of his majesty's speedy and complete recovery. Amidst the silence which followed, the Duke of Norfolk rising, observed that notwithstanding the want of any regular evidence to contradict the testimony of the physicians who had been formally examined, yet the chancellor enjoying the honour of being personally admitted into the royal presence, his statement carried with it irresistible authority. "Nevertheless," continued the duke, "I could wish to learn what is the present aspect of the king's health; what steps are intended to be pursued after the proposed period of adjournment, if the sovereign, continuing to advance in progressive amendment, shall nevertheless be then unable to resume his regular functions. Lastly, will another examination of the physicians take place?" To the first of these enquiries the chancellor gave a satisfactory reply. "As far," answered he, "as my judgment enables me to form an opinion, the posture of his majes-



ty's mind appears to be clear and distinct. During the recent interviews which I have had with him in obedience to his commands, I have remained in his presence at one time for an hour and a quarter. On this very day I passed a full hour with him. Throughout both these audiences I found his intelligence perfectly sound, inasmuch that I consider him to be capable of conversing on any subject." Evading the duke's subsequent questions, "Whatever measures might be hereafter proposed," he said, "must be founded on the state of his majesty's health, and could not therefore as yet be accurately stated." An adjournment followed.

24th—28th February.—While all public business was thus suspended, the king continued to make the most rapid and uninterrupted advances to perfect recovery. As early as the 25th of the month, Warren had signed a *report* declaring that "he appeared to be free from complaint;" and two days afterwards, orders were issued to discontinue the "bulletins." His majesty even resumed his accustomed intercourse with Pitt by letters, manifesting in them, as well as in every other act, a composed mind. He might indeed be said to have recommenced the exercise of his regal functions, as on the last day of February he signed a commission filled up at the treasury, and transmitted to Kew for

that purpose. Perhaps, in such a proceeding there was something informal, if not illegal; no parliamentary proof existing of his restoration to sanity since the last examination of the physicians. But, as no legislative act had received the royal sanction declaring him suspended from the exercise of the sovereign authority, ministers, conscious of the general wishes of the nation, ventured to pass the strict limits of law. Numerous individuals distinguished by the king's regard or partiality, among whom were Lord Hawksbury, Sir Joseph Banks, and West the celebrated painter, obtained access to him: but he did not as yet think proper to admit into his presence either the Prince of Wales or Duke of York.

A circumstance which took place likewise at this time tended still more to widen the breach. The two Irish houses of parliament having, in opposition to all the efforts of the lord-lieutenant, and certainly with more precipitation than wisdom, addressed the Prince of Wales to take on him the regency of that kingdom, *during the king's malady, without restrictions*, sent over a deputation to London for the purpose of announcing it to his royal highness. At their head were placed the Duke of Leinster and the Earl of Charlemont, who arrived in the English capital on the 25th of February, the very day when his

majesty was declared to be "free from complaint." On the 27th, precisely as the medical reports were suppressed on account of the king's *complete recovery*, these delegates presented the address of the Irish parliament to his royal highness at Carlton House. He made them a grateful and appropriate answer. But it was thought that the members of the deputation would have acted more judiciously, if, on finding the king recovered, they had written to their constituents at Dublin, demanding new instructions. The Duke of York entertained them at his residence in Whitehall on the day of presenting the address. This dinner was followed by a superb banquet given at Carlton House, where not only the Dukes of York and of Cumberland assisted, but at which were likewise present, with the principal opposition peers, Fox, Burke, Sheridan, Francis, Courtenay, and Lord John Townsend, then one of the members for Westminster. Fox had previously made his appearance in the house of commons. After passing a few weeks very joyously and convivially in the metropolis, the Irish delegates returned home. If they had arrived a month earlier, their appearance and mission would have produced no ordinary effect: but, coming after the king's recovery, and nevertheless persisting to prosecute the original purpose for which they were sent, so strange a mode of proceeding

excited many animadversions, not unaccompanied with ridicule.

As soon as the king resumed his ordinary occupations, he passed a great part of his time in the perusal of the recent debates that had arisen in both houses. The *divisions*, accompanied with the printed lists of the members who respectively voted upon each side, formed likewise an interesting subject of his attention. I know that, after maturely reviewing them, he said: "The conduct of two individuals in the house of commons affects me with much surprize; the one, that he should have supported me; the other, that he deserted me. I mean Mr. Dundas in the first, and Sir Charles Gould in the second instance." However interested or relaxed Dundas's political principles might be supposed, yet the superiority of his judgment kept him firm to Pitt. From the opposite party he could not hope for employment. He consulted, therefore, his interest and his ambition, not less than his honour and his character, in standing or falling with his friend the minister. Sir Charles Gould found himself in a different predicament. He was then only a knight, having received the distinction in 1779, as the representative of Admiral Sir Edward Hughes, when that naval officer was decorated with the order of the *Bath*. Mr. Gould being bred to the law, at an early period of life made

proposals to Mr. Morgan of Ruperra, in the county of Glamorgan, for the hand of one of his daughters. "I have," answered he, "two girls. One is handsome; the other, not so well endowed by nature. In order to repair that deficiency, I mean to give her fifteen hundred pounds as a marriage portion. To her sister I shall only give one thousand. Which of them would you wish to have?" "Allow me to enquire," replied Gould, "which is the eldest?" "The plain girl," rejoined he. "Then, if you please, sir," said Gould, "I'll have *her*."

The marriage was accomplished, the bride having at the time three brothers, two of whom I personally knew in parliament. They nevertheless all died without leaving issue; and Gould, in right of his wife, inherited the immense estates situate at Tredegar, at Ruperra, and in other parts of South Wales, which at this hour exceed forty thousand pounds per annum. Not long after the king's accession, in 1762, Gould had been made judge advocate general of the forces; a post which he held nearly four-and-forty years. His inclinations, his principles, and his official employment, all impelled him to support administration. But he was brought into the house of commons as member for the county of Brecon by the *Morgan* interest; and Pitt having offended that family in order to oblige the Duke

of Beaufort, Gould, who beheld himself the probable eventual heir to their vast property, quitted the minister on some questions to follow his brother-in-law into opposition. Such was the secret history of his defection, at which the king expressed so much astonishment. Gould, when he obtained the Morgan estates, assumed at the same time their name; both of which have descended to his son. But the father never could succeed in attaining the grand object of his ambition, a British peerage. Pitt created him, indeed, a baronet in 1792, and subsequently raised him to a place in the privy council. He supplicated, implored, offered to resign his employment of judge advocate general, and exerted during many successive years every effort in order to conciliate the minister. Pitt remained, however, inflexible, and Sir Charles died a commoner in 1806, as his son continues in 1820.

*1st—9th March.*—Both houses still adjourning from time to time in order to allow a sufficient interval for the confirmation of his majesty's recovery, Pitt, on the 2nd of March, at length briefly adverted to the fact, as forming a motive to postpone during a few days the resumption of public business. The Prince of Wales and Duke of York were finally permitted to wait on the king; but their reception, as might be expected, was cold, grave, and formal, admitting no explanations

whatever of their past conduct. Four pages of the back-stairs, two of whom were Germans, the other two English, suspected of divulging or transmitting information to Carlton House during the critical periods of the king's malady, received their dismissal. So did the Marquis of Lothian, as colonel of the first regiment of Life-guards; and the Duke of Queensberry, as one of the lords of the bedchamber. Yet even in these acts his majesty manifested a mind exempt from, and superior to, any vindictive sentiment. The Duke of Queensberry's large property in England, as well as in Scotland, rendered him indifferent to the loss of his place, in a pecuniary point of view: but Lord Lothian could ill afford such a defalcation from his income. Aware of the circumstance, the king, while he removed the marquis from a situation near his own person, nevertheless bestowed on him another regiment; compensating the difference between it and the former by an annual allowance out of the privy purse. General Burgoyne and Fox did not less inveigh with the utmost acrimony against the treatment of Lord Lothian, as a shameless act of ministerial vengeance and oppression. Taking advantage of the army estimates being moved in the house of commons some few days afterwards, Fox exclaimed, "The language of ministers to military officers evidently is, 'You may vote

against government, you may oppose the interests of the king, and you may do both without incurring punishment; *but you shall not support the interests of the Prince of Wales.*" No word was uttered by Pitt in reply.

If the fact relative to the Marquis of Lothian strongly proves the placability of George the Third's temper, the particulars that I am about to recount will equally attest the enlargement and serenity of his mind. During the first days of March, being at Kew, accompanied only by one of his equerries, while walking through the apartments of the palace, the astonished eyes of the equerry were involuntarily arrested by *a strait waistcoat* that lay on a chair. Hastily averting his view from an object which recalled images so painful, he endeavoured to conceal his embarrassment. But the king, who perceived it, and who well knew the cause, turning to him, said, "You need not be afraid to look at it. Perhaps it is the best friend I ever had in my life." The gentleman in question was Mr. Robert Greville, brother to the late Earl of Warwick, who related it to Sir John Macpherson. Nearly at the same time, before the king quitted Kew to remove to Windsor, he received information that *a poor-house*, or hospital, was constructing at Richmond. Without previously giving notice of his design, attended only by Major Price, his equerry in



waiting, he entered the building, and inspected every part of it ; not omitting the rooms destined for the reception of lunatics, which he examined with minute and particular attention. Having gratified his curiosity, he left the hospital ; observing that he derived great pleasure from seeing so comfortable an asylum, and such excellent accommodations, provided for persons labouring under the misfortune of insanity. After his complete recovery, on returning to Windsor, the windows of his apartments at the lodge, which had been nailed down during the first paroxysms of his malady in order to guard against any sudden act of frenzy,—by a censurable negligence of the domestics still remained in the same state. The king, not aware of the circumstance, attempted to throw up one of the windows. Finding it fastened, the cause was explained to him. He expressed neither emotion nor irritation on the occasion.

*10th March.* — At length, after repeated adjournments, the two houses met for the dispatch of business. The speech, which the chancellor pronounced in his majesty's name, was evidently drawn up in terms calculated to obviate opposition, and, if possible, to produce unanimity. In it the sovereign returned " his warmest acknowledgments for the proofs of affectionate attachment exhibited to his person, the zealous con-

cern shewn for the honour and interests of his crown, together with the security and good government of his dominions." No eulogiums, either on ministers, or on their late measures, were introduced. Earl Gower, eldest son of the Marquis of Stafford, and who not long afterwards succeeded the Duke of Dorset as ambassador at the court of France, moved the address to the throne in the lower house. He performed it with brevity, avoiding cautiously every topic likely to excite a difference of sentiment. Mr. Yorke, now Earl of Hardwicke, who seconded the motion, did not think it requisite to exert equal circumspection. He ventured to observe, that "the house might find subject of congratulation in having proceeded with more caution than expedition:" adding, that "it must be to them a source of exultation to perceive that his majesty was able, on resuming the duties of his office, not only to approve, but likewise to applaud their proceedings." These expressions, which implied the strongest approbation of Pitt and his colleagues, did not escape Fox's animadversion, though he declared that they should not prevent him from concurring in an unanimous vote.

"I do not believe, however," continued Fox, "that the king intended to express any such opinion of the late parliamentary proceedings as

has been intimated ; because the speech is always considered, not as his, but as the minister's speech. It is therefore altogether improbable that he would make it the vehicle of applauding his own measures. I entertain likewise too high an opinion of his majesty's regard for justice, to suppose him capable of deciding between two parties without previously hearing both ; *and I am sure that, down to the present time, no opportunity has offered itself for giving any such explanation.* Nevertheless, I will not be prevented from joining in the general joy on the present auspicious occasion." Pitt, unwilling, no doubt, to disturb the unanimity of the house, remaining silent, the address was voted without a dissentient voice. Lord Graham then moved a congratulatory address to the queen. Fox remarked, that his only objection arose from its being unusual ; adding, that when Margaret Nicholson made an attempt on the person of the king, no such testimony of respect or loyalty was proposed to be given to her majesty. " If, however," added he, " all Europe has admired the *queen's* conduct during the late afflicting malady, there is likewise *another person* whose conduct has equally excited universal admiration, and whose character has acquired additional splendor in the eyes of all mankind. Should her majesty be addressed, I can perceive no reason why an address ought not to be pre-

sented to *the Prince of Wales*." The minister, who had hitherto resisted every provocation to mix in the debate, now rose, without however any avowed intention of contesting Fox's principle. He did not, he asserted, believe that a *difference of opinion existed relative to the virtues of the heir-apparent*, nor had he the slightest objection to address that illustrious person: but he could find no precedent for it. To queens, there were numerous instances on the journals of the house. As a proof of his assertion, he produced an address carried up to Queen Anne, on her husband Prince George of Denmark's recovery from sickness. Fox tacitly concurred in this example; though he might have replied, that Anne reigned in her own right, not as a queen consort. The two cases were therefore widely different. He preferred, however, acquiescence.

In the house of peers, — (where two speeches were pronounced; the first, by the Earl of Chesterfield; the other, by Lord Cathcart; throughout every word of which, court adulation borrowed the language of gratitude to the Supreme Being for restoring to England her sovereign;) — one, and only one, difficulty was suggested respecting the propriety of their parliamentary proceeding. Earl Stanhope, a man who at every period of his life, whether as a commoner or as a peer, displayed the same ardent, eccentric, fear-

less, indefatigable, and independent character, stood forward to state his doubts on the principle, as well as the propriety, of the intended address to the throne. "A bill," observed he, "is actually in progress, which contains a clause specifying the precise manner in which the king is to resume the reins of government on his recovery. The queen and her council are empowered to judge, and to decide, when this act may take place. Now, the two houses having in the first instance ascertained, by the testimony of the physicians, the royal incapacity; and having next specified the mode and channel through which the nation may be satisfied of the sovereign's complete restoration; *is the present measure strictly parliamentary?* I give full confidence to the fact of recovery; but it is essential that we should act in consonance to *order*." The chancellor, who probably was not prepared for such an objection from such a quarter, made nevertheless a prompt and ingenious, if not a solid reply. "No declaration of the two houses could," he said, "deprive the king of the *right* to govern: nor could any clause interrupt his re-assuming his *power*, on the total cessation of his disorder." Alluding to the *Regency Bill* with a sort of repugnance, as a measure which he wished to be buried in oblivion, he denied that either the *bill* itself, or the *clause* inserted in it, was founded on the testimony of

the physicians. "Parliament," he asserted, "had better proof of his majesty's illness; namely, his having neither met the two houses in person, nor issued a commission to execute the duty." These arguments, though coming from the wool-sack, made no impression on Lord Stanhope. He retained, and repeated his assertions; adding nevertheless, "I am a friend to ministers, and do not mean any insinuation prejudicial to them. My intention is only to put them on their guard." I was of opinion at the time, and I remain so, that, as a matter of parliamentary order, Lord Stanhope was right in his positions. No other peer however supporting him, the address both to the king and queen passed unanimously, as it had done in the commons.

These legislative deliberations were followed on the same night by the most brilliant, as well as the most universal exhibition of national loyalty and joy, ever witnessed in England. It originated, not with the police, nor with the government, but with the people, and was the genuine tribute of their affection. No efforts of despotism could, indeed, have enforced it. London displayed a blaze of light from one extremity to the other; the illuminations extending, without any metaphor, from Hampstead and Highgate to Clapham, and even as far as Tooting: while the vast distance between Greenwich and Kensing-

ton presented the same dazzling appearance. Even the elements seemed to favour the spectacle: for the weather, though rather cold, was dry. Nor were the opulent and the middle orders the only classes who came conspicuously forward on this occasion. The poorest mechanics contributed their proportion; and instances were exhibited of cobblers' stalls decorated with one or two farthing candles. Such was the tribute of popular attachment manifested in March 1789 towards a sovereign who, only seven years earlier, in March 1782, after losing a vast empire beyond the Atlantic, seemed to stand on a fearful precipice! But it would be unjust not to admit that the virtues of his character derived a lustre from the wise or fortunate selection of his minister; from the recent severe affliction that he had himself undergone; and from the change of administration which his son meditated to accomplish, as soon as he should be invested with the regency. That measure itself, however necessary its adoption had been under the existing circumstances that produced it, and however deeply it then occupied the public mind, seemed now to disappear from recollection like a phantom. Every part of the public business, which during several months had been postponed or suspended in consequence of the king's incapacity, was immediately brought forward; and as early as the

16th of March, Sir George Yonge, secretary at war, presented the army estimates in the house of commons. The opposition, whose vision of power had been so unexpectedly and improbably dissolved, again reduced to their former numbers, beheld Pitt resume the helm of state with augmented popularity, amidst the general applauses of the country.

It is at this point of time that I conclude my memoirs. Many motives, personal as well as public, prevent me from prolonging them, though I continued to sit in parliament near five years afterwards, down to February 1794. I am already entered on my seventieth year; but if I cannot therefore describe my time of life in the language of Umbricius,

“*Dum nova canities, dum prima et recta senectus,*”

I can at least say with *him*,

————— “*Pedibus me*

*Porto meis, nullo dextram subeunte bacillo.*”

I am not, however, on that account less mindful of Horace's

“*Solve senescentem.*”

Other reasons prompt me here to lay down my pen. After the restoration of George the Third to health, another order of things seems to date; revolutionary France occupying the principal attention of Europe from 1789 to 1815. At the moment of finishing this work, I am deeply sen-



sible to its numberless deficiencies; some arising, no doubt, from my want of ability; more, as my enemies may perhaps assert, from want of information. My best excuse is Pope's; who says,

"If Queensberry to strip there's no compelling,  
'Tis from her handmaid we must take a Helen."

With Lord Clarendon and Burnet, I well know that I can enter into no competition, in the great component materials of contemporary history. Their rank, offices, and facility of access to the highest sources of knowledge, place them far above all rivalry on my part. Yet upon two points closely connected in themselves, and which ought to form the basis of historical composition,—I mean, truth and impartiality,—I may challenge perhaps a superiority even to *them*. How, in fact, could Lord Clarendon divest himself of his partiality to Charles the First; or the Bishop of Salisbury lay aside his attachment to William the Third? I stand in no such predicament relative to George the Third, or to George the Fourth. From the former prince I received few or no benefits, though I supported him in parliament, and out of parliament, during some of the most critical periods of his reign. Nor do I owe greater obligations to his successor, though peculiar circumstances led to his conferring on me the rank of a baronet. The services that I rendered Pitt,

to some of which I have had occasion to allude in former parts of these memoirs, far outweigh, even in the estimation of his friends, any favours that I ever received from him. With Fox I never had any political connexion, and rarely voted with him, either in or out of office, during nearly fourteen years that I remained in the house of commons. Regarding both those illustrious men through the medium of time, I contemplate them only as objects of investigation, wholly divested of partiality or of enmity. Conscious that I stand on the verge of life, and that I must render an account at the bar of that Power from whom I received my being, of all that I have *written*, as well as of all that I have *done*, I can offer no homage to Him except truth; and to posterity, my greatest, if not my only recommendation, must consist in my impartiality.



## APPENDIX.

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### LETTERS AND PAPERS RESPECTING THE QUEEN OF DENMARK.

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FROM THE BARON DE SECKENDORF.

#### No. I.

UN mot pour vous, mon très-cher. Tout va bien : on espère même que la Princesse\* se retirera à neuf heures, alors Sa Maj<sup>te</sup>† pourra vous parler jusqu'à 11 heures à son aise. Vous pouvez lui dire tout ce que vous avés sur le cœur. Le mauvais tems m'annonce l'impossibilité de me trouver demain matin au rendezvous : ainsi, ayés la grace, étant d'ailleurs destiné d'être mouillé, de passer à huit heures chés moi. Ordonnés les chevaux à neuf, et partés sous la garde de Dieu. Bon soir.

Je retourne le chiffre, dont j'ai pris copie. Rapportés-moi demain tout ce que vous avés encore de papiers ou d'ailleurs.

Vous verres la Reine précisément à neuf heures.

BARON DE S——F.

Z—ll, 24 Mars, 1775.

#### No. II.

MON très-cher ami,—La mort également douloureuse et rapide de mon incomparable maîtresse renverse tout d'un coup l'édifice de notre prospérité. Que nous sommes

\* Héréditaire de Brunswic.

† La Reine de Dannemarc, Caroline Matilde.

malheureux, et que sa perte est grande pour nos amis ! Lepy a été incessamment informé par moi de cette triste catastrophe. Le paquet dont se trouvoit chargé le courrier a été renvoyé sans être décacheté au S<sup>r</sup> Abel par Alis, et j'ignore entièrement ce qu'auroit été la résolution qu'il comptoit donner aux amis de Montpellier.

Alis m'a promis de faire en sorte que toutes les dépenses faites par eux et par vous seroient remboursées par Abel le plus tôt que possible ; et sitôt que j'ai des nouvelles sûres à cet égard, vous en serés instruit. En attendant, je vous prie de dire ceci à Lepy. Il est juste que personne perde son argent.

Que deviendrons-nous à cette heure, mon très-cher ami ? Resterés-vous à Londres, ou ferés-vous le voyage que vos parens avoient projeté ? Puis-je me flatter de vous revoir jamais ? Grand Dieu, quelle désolation en si peu de momens ! Je ne pourrai jamais me remettre de ce coup. Votre dernière lettre parvint encore à la chère défunte.

Adieu, mon très-cher ami. Je ne cesserai de ma vie de vous aimer, et de conserver la mémoire de votre attachement sincère pour la précieuse Agujari.

Ce 16 May 75.

Tout à vous.

BROCARD.

From Zell. From the Baron de  
S—k—f, immediately after  
her majesty's death.

N. W. W. Jr.

No. III.

VOTRE bien bonne et aimable lettre du mois passé est entre mes mains, et j'ose vous dire qu'elle m'a été dans mes amertumes actuelles d'une d'autant plus grande consolation, que je sais quelle est l'honnêteté de votre ame et la candeur de votre façon de penser. L'incluse a été non

seulement remise d'abord à Alis, qui, pour plus de sûreté, ne vous fera réponse qu'avec le courier ordinaire d'Hannovre; mais je tiens sa promesse sacrée, de s'intéresser vivement pour vous auprès le Sr Abel: il faut absolument que celui-ci aye soin d'un serviteur si zélé de sa sœur, qui, de son vivant, étoit si fort éloigné de tout ce qui s'appelle intérêt ou récompense. Et d'ailleurs, Lepy et ses consortes renoncent et refusent restitution des fraix quelconques; ils n'exigent que de vous voir placé. Comment le séries-vous, mon très-cher et digne ami, selon vos vœux? Ayés la confiance en moi de me le dire. Apparemment c'est à Londres même, dans quelque bureau d'un secrétaire d'état? Car pour être employé dans les pays étrangers, il faut, je crois, savoir beaucoup de langues étrangères. Vous continuerez de m'adresser vos nouvelles à Zelle; car tant que le Roi ne se déclare pas sur notre sort, il faut y rester tranquillement, et cela pourroit, dit-on, bien durer encore quelques mois. Toutefois, mon cher, vous saurés dans quel trou du monde me trouver.

Comme vous me demandés quelques particularités de la mort de celle qui faisoit nos délices, et que nous ne voulons jamais cesser de pleurer amèrement, je ne saurois mieux vous en informer, que par la copie d'une lettre qui fut envoyée par une de nos dames à Copenh. quelques jours après ce décès si infortuné pour nous. Du reste, les gazetters en Allemagne, France, et en Hollande ont parlé de ce triste évènement d'une façon très-touchante, et rendant tous les regrets et respects imaginables aux cendres de cette chère Princesse. Oh leurs ennemis, qui ne cessoient point de la persécuter, méritoient bien que le bruit de l'empoisonnement devint plus général; car au bout du compte, c'est la douleur et leurs cabales qui l'ont tué.

Le billet cy-joint vous informera ce que les états veulent

faire en honneur de sa mémoire, et vous serez aussi très-flatté de cette marque non-équivoque du zèle et de la vénération de tout un peuple. Cette annonce paroîtra dans toutes les gazettes d'Allemagne, de France, et des Pays Bas. Nous désirons, mon cher, que vous la faites traduire en bon Anglois, et ayés soin que cela soit aussi inséré en plusieurs feuilles publiques, chés vous, en Ecosse, Irlande. Quant à l'anecdote que j'ai l'honneur de vous communiquer, il n'est pas possible de la lire sans pleurer. On nous a sollicité de la publier aussi en Angleterre. Cela sera encore vous, mon bon ami, qui la fera paroître dans quelques journaux, sous titre, *Trait de Tendresse Maternelle*. Mais comment traduire bien et que le sens n'y perde rien, les quatre vers ? Eh bien ; je vous recommande avec instance ces deux entreprises, vous suppliant de m'en faire en tems et lieu le rapport. Marie Mancini\* n'a pas été ici, ni dans la maladie, ni après la mort. Je ne la connois pas assés pour juger sa sensibilité à l'occasion d'un évènement si triste ; mais si on en est susceptible, ne faut-il pas se faire le reproche d'avoir aggravé par sa conduite le poids des adversités sous lequel la chère Agujari gémissait ? Ah, mon ami, que le souvenir de sa perte me sera ineffaçable ! que je crains par-là bouleverser entièrement le système de ma prospérité ! La chère défunte restera enterrée à Zelle aux caveaux de Duc : c'est apparemment par une oeconomie mesquine, qui se manifeste d'ailleurs en tout ce que les Excellences de ce pays font, qu'on ne veut pas la transporter à Hanovre. Savés-vous bien que les gazettes disent, qu'après que les enfans royaux étoient déjà en grand deuil, qu'on donna à Copenhague un bal à la cour. N'y a-t-il donc aucune âme honnête de gazetier à Londres, qui venge une conduite si scandaleuse ?

\* La Princesse Héréditaire de B——c, sœur de la Reine Matilde, et de Sa Majesté Britannique.

Oh, mon ami, si j'étois susceptible de l'ombre de joie, j'en aurois eu vivement, en ouvrant le dernier paquet de livres qui furent envoyés d'Angleterre à la chérissime Agujari, mais qu'elle ne vit plus ; et y trouvant "Cursory Remarks made in a Tour, by N. Wra—" j'en commencerai aujourd'hui la lecture, moitié en le dévorant, parceque c'est le stil de celui que je ne finirai de ma vie à chérir. De grace n'oubliez pas à me marquer quand vous quittés l'Angleterre, et où vous allés. Je suis *usque ad cineres* entièrement le vôtre.

BROCARD.

Ce 20 Juin 75.

No. IV.

JE suis en possession, mon bon, cher et bien-aimé ami, de vos lettres du 30 Juin, 10 Juillet, et je viens recevoir celle du 21 Juillet *aujourd'hui*—jour, après celui du 10 May, un des plus malheureux, des plus tristes pour moi ; car c'est aujourd'hui que toute notre cour se sépare, que les dames partent, que je suis sur le point d'aller m'enterrer à une campagne à quelques meilles d'ici pour attendre encore quelle sera ma destinée. Je comptois de-là vous répondre avec autant de circonstance que possible ; mais comme vous me dites être sur le point de votre départ, je me hâte de vous dire encore ce peu de lignes, car mes chevaux sont déjà devant la voiture. Il m'est incompréhensible, mon cher, de ce que vous n'avez point reçu par le courrier d'Hannovre les nouvelles d'Alis. Il n'y a que cinq jours qu'il fut ici, et qu'il m'assura non seulement qu'il vous avoit écrit, mais que le rapport à Abel étoit parti par la même occasion, conformément à ce que vous aviez bien voulu nous manifester de vos intentions. Il est d'ailleurs si fort homme de parole et exact, que je ne puis douter un moment que tout s'est exécuté à la ligne. Or, mon ami, s'il est possible encore, ne hâtes pas



trop de quitter la patrie ; voyons du moins ce que Abel repondra à Alis ; je le saurois au retour du courrier, et je vous informerai incessamment, car je ne quitte pas encore le país, et vous pouvés continuer à m'adresser vos lettres à Zelle ; en revanche je vous conjure de me donner une direction ultérieure où vous trouver, ou à qui de vos amis à Londres je puis adresser mes lettres, car il me paroît absolument impossible de renoncer au commerce littéraire avec vous : mon cœur vous chérit et vous estime ; et n'avons-nous pas été liés par des nœux que ni le tems ni la vie peut dissoudre ? Tous les amis de mon incomparable Agujari me resteront éternellement en mémoire, et il n'y a que dans l'autre monde où nous serons tous ensemble heureux. Jugés par ce que je viens de vous dire, si le silence de Lepy et ses compatriotes, qui garde vis-à-vis de moi, tout comme vis-à-vis de vous, ne me doit être que de plus sensible ? Encore Lundi passé je lui ai écrit : je l'ai conjuré de me répondre, je me suis offert à une entrevue partout où il le souhaiteroit, mais encore point de réponse ; et cependant on n'entend pas une syllabe de quelque aventure sinistre arrivée. Cette conduite est donc pour se désespérer ; cependant nous ne voulons pas le condamner, avant que de savoir leurs raisons. Vous aurés appris peut-être qu'Abel fait administrer les biens de la chère défunte, jusqu'à ce que les enfans soyent majeurs. On dit, qu'ausitôt que l'inventaire sera fait, qu'on chargera moi de cette administration ; occupation qui me sera précieuse et chère, parceque je puis rester par-là dans une espèce de connexion avec les amis de la Agujari, et me flatter de voir, parler et connoître ses enfans. Et puis, je resterai dans ce país-ci. Vous serés informé de tout, mon cher, pourvû que vous daignés me nommer le canal par où je vous retrouve.

L'article de la gazette a été non seulement tout à fait

conforme aux vœux généraux de notre province et de votre ami en particulier, mais écrit avec une élégance, force et délicatesse Cicéronienne, qu'il a été lu, traduit, excerpté, etc. On fait imprimer à cette heure, *Les Dernières Heures* de notre chère défunte : quoique l'original est en Allemand, et qu'il sera difficile de le traduire bien dans une autre langue, je souhaiterois pourtant vous l'envoyer tel qu'il est ; faites le vous l'expliquer, et vous fondrés en larmes. En attendant, acceptés la silhouette d'une personne qui nous sera sacrée, vous la reconnoitrés facilement ; il est triste pour nous qu'il n'en existe point de portrait. Adieu, mon cher ; je crois du moins pas avoir manqué de répondre aux points les plus essentiels de vos chères missives. Il faut absolument que je finisse —mon cœur est navré de la plus profonde douleur, et je ne peux plus. Adieu encore une fois. Avant que de partir, votre adresse, ne l'oubliez pas.

Zelle, ce 1 Août 75.

Entierrement le vôtre,

BROCARD.

No. V.

LA vôtre du 11 Août, mon bon ami, toute chère et précieuse qu'elle m'est, parceque elle me vient de votre part, m'a doublement affligé et me pénètre de douleur, vû que par le voyage que vous allés entreprendre je me sens arracher vos nouvelles et les informations de votre sort, et que d'un autre côté vous me faites connoître les peu d'empressemens d'Abel de vous récompenser le zèle et vos peines du tems passé. Alis, toujours coupable d'avoir négligé et oublié sa réponse qu'il vous devoit, vient pourtant m'assurer le plus légalement du monde (car je suis allé moi-même à Hannovre pour le pousser et lui en faire

des reproches) qu'il vous avoit recommandé par le dernier courrier à son maître avec toute l'énergie possible, mais qu'il n'avoit donné aucune réplique à cet égard : il ajoute, qu'il doute qu'on fera *d'abord* quelque chose pour vous, vû qu'une grace pareille intrigueroit le public, nommément d'où elle tiroit sa source ; il espère cependant qu'avec le tems on parviendra à son but ; il m'a juré, que vous ne seriez pas oublié par lui, quand même éloigné de votre patrie. Il se peut bien que les malheureuses circonstances dans lesquelles se trouvent actuellement les choses renversent toute autre méditation, et empêchent Abel de songer aux graces et récompenses même les plus légitimement méritées ; mais toutefois la reconnaissance des grands est presque une chimère. Personne de ceux qui ont appartenus à la chère Agujari ont lieu de s'en louer : ils ne moureront pas de faim avec ce qu'on leur a assigné pour pension, mais c'est aussi tout. La pension de Brocard est des plus modiques ; on ne lui a pas même offert une place quelconque dans le service, et quoique on l'a à la fin chargé de l'administration dont vous êtes instruit, tout ce qu'il en a de profit, inclusivement sa pension, ne va pas au-delà de 110 guinées. Comment peut-on vivre de cela dans un poste un peu éminent ? Mais nonobstant de cela il est bien aise d'en être chargé ; il obtient par-là un titre de rester dans le pays, de continuer les relations intimes avec le pauvre Lepy et ses amis abandonnés, et de se faire connoître en tems et lieu à la jeune famille. Si donc, mon digne ami, vous voulés daigner me donner quelque-fois de vos nouvelles, et j'ose vous conjurer à ne me point refuser cette unique grace, adressés-les toujours à l'endroit où j'avois le bonheur de faire votre connoissance. Que ces jours me seront toujours mémorables et en même tems douloureuses ! Souvent je vous ai encore bien vivement devant mes yeux ; et le tout n'a été pourtant qu'un songe.

Aussi puis-je vous assurer que la playe du malheur que j'ai reçue me fait encore sentir sa douleur comme si je n'en avois été blessé que depuis hier, et il me semble que le tems perd son droit et ses peines avec moi.

Avés-vous à la fin reçu des nouvelles de nos amis ? Ils m'en ont donné il n'y a pas long-tems : le rideau est tombé, il s'en trouvent encore désolés. J'espère qu'on pourra arranger entre Lepy et moi un rendezvous ; je languis après cette connoissance. Il ne me reste, mon très-cher et digne ami, que de vous souhaiter le voyage le plus fortuné du monde ; et de vous assurer, qu'en cas que Abel continue d'être ingrat et insensible aux récompenses qu'il vous *doit*, selon toutes les loix naturelles et positives, je ne me tranquilliserai pas, jusqu'à ce que j'aie pû en trouver ou chés lui, ou dans l'administration, ou dans la jeune famille, qui assurément sera disposée de mieux reconnaître les sacrifices qu'on a faites pour leur M\*\*.

Adieu encore une fois : il me coûte une peine infinie de m'arracher de la conversation avec vous ; mais j'espère que cela ne sera pas pour long-tems, car assurément vous voulés bien me donner de vos nouvelles et de vos addresses ultérieures.

Ce 1 Septemb. 75.

No. VI.

POURRIÉS-VOUS bien douter un seul moment, mon bien cher et estimable ami, que je fus comblé de satisfaction et saisi de la joie la plus vive, lorsque il m'arrivoit le plaisir inattendu de votre affectueuse lettre du 18 courant ? Oh non, vous n'en doutés pas, vous me rendés pleinement justice sur l'inviolabilité et la ferveur de mes sentimens pour vous ; vous ne craignés pas, que le tems, l'éloignement et le silence affoiblira des affections qu'un tems plus heureux que celui d'à-présent contracta, et dont la base étoit zèle,

espect et estime mutuelle. Recevés donc mille et mille remerciemens de ma part, d'avoir voulu incessamment après votre retour à Londres penser à moi et me gratifier de vos précieuses nouvelles. Je me hâte de vous donner les miennes par le premier courrier; et comme je devois d'ailleurs écrire ce matin à Alis, qui se trouve depuis 4 semaines sur ses terres en Franconie (dont il ne retourne qu'au mois d'Août), j'ai saisi cette occasion pour appeller à notre secours son intercession auprès d'Abel, pour le faire réagir en votre faveur, et réassumer une affaire que votre absence a peut-être fait languir. N'importe que cela ne soit pas d'abord décidé; à force de lever sa voix, ce que je ne cesserai jamais de faire tant que je suis entre les vivans, il viendra sûrement un tems où on récompensera un zèle, un désintérêt, un mérite semblable au vôtre. Le plaisir que votre retour aura occasionné à Fierville et consortes est assurément d'une nature qui vous flâtera, et pourra vous prouver qu'ils vous chérissent. Imaginés-vous, mon ami, qu'ils se sont formés l'idée que je n'étois pas à Zell, mais chés moi en Franconie, ce qui nous empêcha de lier connaissance personnelle; mais à l'heure qu'il est, nous sommes convenus Lepy et moi d'un rendezvous, et je me flatte que cela aura lieu en peu de jours. Combien de questions fera-t-on mutuellement! avec quel attendrissement parlera-t-on de ce que nous avons perdu et dont la perte est irréparable! Car, mon ami, quant à moi, au lieu que le tems ait diminué ma douleur, il y a des jours où je la sens plus vivement, dans une plus grande étendue qu'immédiatement après le malheur que nous pleurons. Cela est, sans doute, moins étonnant, parce que je m'occupe à toute heure avec des objets qui me ramènent à ce souvenir lugubre. L'artiste Saxon a mis actuellement la main au monument que les états du Duché de Lunebourg et Zell font ériger dans le Jardin François (où jadis nous promenâmes)

à la mémoire de notre chère et bonne Reine : tout l'ouvrage (qui sera d'un beau marbre blanc) ne s'achèvera qu'en deux ans d'ici ; n'importe. Le cercueil, qu'on fait en partie ici, en partie à Hannovre, sera, sans être magnifique, de toute beauté. En outre, très-cher ami, nous avons à la fin attrapé un image en cire, qui lui ressemble comme deux gouttes d'eau ; si le courrier d'Hannovre, qui va tous les quartiers à Londres, ne part pas avant que je puisse attraper une empreinte, vous aurés de ma part ce cher image, et en ferés le pendant de celui que vous avés déjà. Votre charmante, docte et instructive description du Nord a été avidement lue par toute l'Allemagne, admirée, approuvée, et nous en avons une traduction, qu'on achète partout. L'original n'a-t-il pas été aussi traduit en France ? je n'en doute pas. Toutefois, l'article de la malheureuse catastrophe de 1772 a fort estomaché la cour de Copenh... et j'ai entendu, sans savoir pour bien sûr, qu'on a voulu les confisquer dans les états du Dannemarc. Tant mieux : aveu certain, qu'on rencontre dans vos récits la pure vérité.

Me voilà, mon très-cher ami, à la fin d'une bien longue lettre. Si je suivois mon penchant de m'entretenir avec vous, peut-être seriés-vous obligé de lire encore quatre pages : je finis donc par vous demander en grace de continuer à me donner de vos chères et précieuses nouvelles, car je tiendrai à vous et pour la vie et pour la mort.

BROCARD.

Zell, ce 29 Juin 76.

No. VII.

Zell, ce 15 Sept. 1776.

JE vous écris, mon très-cher, digne et estimable ami, cette lettre, et qui fait réponse à la bien-chère du 30 Juillet, quelques semaines peut-être avant qu'elle partira

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d'ici, et sera par conséquent un peu fort vieille au moment qu'elle aura le bonheur d'être remise entre vos mains. Je veux m'expliquer plus clairement. Le courrier ordinaire d'Hannovre en doit être pour cette fois le porteur, parce que je veux y joindre certain image chéri, dont je vous parlois dans ma précédente, et dont l'heureuse arrivée me fera plaisir, parce que vous y mettez du prix, et semblés être sensible à cette petite marque de mon souvenir et zèle, qui est bien le moindre de ceux que je désire tous les jours ardemment de vous donner en chaque rencontre. Comme il ne part qu'au commencement du mois prochain, et que je ne puis plus remettre mon voyage pour la Saxe et la Franconie au-delà du 15 du courant, je laisse aujourd'hui ce petit paquet entre les mains de mon commissionnaire d'ici, afin qu'il l'envoie à Hannovre le jour du départ du courrier. Ce même homme a le plein pouvoir de recevoir toutes les lettres à mon adresse; et celles dont vous, cher et bien-aimé, daigneriez me ravir, ne manqueront jamais de me parvenir promptement et avec exactitude : car il vous plaira pourtant de me tenir parole et de continuer notre correspondance. Elle fait partie essentielle du peu de bonheur réel qui est mon partage dans ce monde, fera et dans le bruyant des cours et dans la retraite les délices de mon ame et un besoin que je ne saurois plus manquer.

Alis a été sommé par moi ces jours passés, afin qu'il retourne de vous rappeler, dans les dépêches qu'il a coutume de donner au courrier ordinaire, au souvenir d'Abel. A la fin, nous parviendrons pourtant de faire prêcher sur l'inactivité et l'oubli qu'on marque à votre sujet, et qui, je vous l'assure, dans des moments de réflexion, et où je récapitule votre zèle, vos mérites, votre désintéressement dans un tems plus heureux, vos peines, fatigues et même vos dangers, me rongent le cœur et m'attendrissent jusqu'aux pleurs. J'ai remis à Alis un ex-

trait très-circonstancié et détaillé de votre dernière lettre, lequel le mettra absolument au fait de la position où vous vous trouvez vis-à-vis de quelques ministres d'Abel, et les intentions et faveurs de la haute noblesse, de sorte que par-là même Alis trouve un prétexte plausible de plaider votre cause.

Vous avés deviné juste, mon ami, en supposant que mon entrevue avec Lepy seroit touchante : elle l'a été à tous égards, et j'ai été vivement affecté lorsque le moment arriva de m'arracher de ses bras. Elle se fit à trois postes d'ici à l'insçu de tout le monde, parce que je n'avois pas même un domestique avec moi, et jusqu'à cette heure rien en a transpiré. Nous nous sommes rencontrés le soir à 9 heures, point couchés de toute la nuit, et séparés vers les 8 heures du matin. Il est sûrement un homme très-estimable, qui mérite qu'on le chérit. Vous êtes entré pour beaucoup et bien souvent dans notre conversation, mon ami. J'ai donné ma parole de venir au Février ou Mars, tems vers lequel je serai de retour à Zell, leur rendre la visite de quelques jours, dans la ville qui leur est la plus proche ; car ils ne sont pas gens à écrire beaucoup, à ce qui me semble.

Je languis après le moment que vos nouvelles lettres sur l'histoire de la France, écrites pendant les momens de loisir de votre voyage, paroissent au jour ; et je suis assés peu modeste de vous les demander avec la plus vive instance *d'abord* que le courrier ordinaire retourne à Hanovre. Pour plus de sûreté, faites une enveloppe à ma lettre avec l'adresse,—*A Monsieur Mäntel, valet de chambre de feu S. M. la Reine de Dannem. à Zell.* On m'a aussi parlé dernièrement d'une brochure qui vient de paroître à Londres au sujet de notre chère et respectable défunte protectrice, qui a pour titre, *Memoirs of an Unfortunate Queen* : quoique l'authenticité de ces lettres est



incontestablement fausse, je serois pourtant bien aise de les posséder, vû que je forme collection de tout ce qui a rapport à sa mémoire et à l'évènement douloureux de sa mort. Oserai-je donc, mon très-cher et bien-aimé ami, vous supplier de vouloir bien, par le courrier ordinaire, me faire avoir la dite brochure ? Je ferai en sorte que le prix de son achat vous soit remboursé à Londres.

Et de cette façon je serois donc pour aujourd'hui au bout de ma lettre. Si je voulois y joindre tout ce que mon cœur sent pour vous, les vœux que je ne cesse et que je ne cesserai de ma vie de faire pour votre bien-être et prospérité, et les assurances du zèle et inviolable dévouement qui m'anime quand il s'agit de vous, je prendrois une autre feuille et courerois risque de tomber dans les rédites et de vous déplaire par-là. D'ailleurs, les momens du jour du départ sont, comme vous savés, un peu turbulans. Vivés donc, cher ami, heureux et content ; vous ne sortirez jamais de mon cœur et souvenir. N'oubliez pas celui qui est à vous

*Usque ad mortem.*

P. S<sup>um</sup>.—Encore un mot, mon cher ami, et même dans le moment où je mets pied dans la voiture pour partir. J'ai reçu ce matin une lettre d'Alis, où il me dit, qu'il vous avoit recommandé dernièrement et à une occasion désirée : que cependant il croyoit et vous conseilloit même de présenter une requête au R. d'y demander une place dans un département de quelque secrétaire d'état, et de nommer les Lords Barrington et Nugent vos protecteurs.

Adieu, mon cher : agissés de cette façon, s'il faire se peut, je suis tout à vous.

## No. VIII.

Zelle, ce 25 Février 1777.

D'où prendrai-je, mon bien-cher, mon digne et estimable ami, toutes les expressions de la joie et de la vive reconnaissance qui ont pénétrées mon ame à la réception de vos trois chères lettres du 3 Juillet, 8 d'Octobre et 29 de Novembre de l'année passée ? Mais comment vous dépeindrai-je ma surprise de voir par la dernière, que vous n'ayés point reçu, par la voye du quartier courrier, qui partit d'Hannovre environ le 25 Octobre 1776, ma missive du 15 Sept. avec le P. S<sup>um</sup> de la même date, et une petite boîte marquée M. N. W. dans laquelle se trouvoit le portrait en cire de feu notre incomparable protectrice ? Permettés, cher ami, que je vous mette, tant que possible est, au fait des évènements qui ont mis un si long et pénible intervalle dans notre correspondance. Dieu veuille que vous retrouviés encore mes dites lettres et le portrait !

Je reçus votre chère lettre de Londres, Jermyn Street, du 30 Juillet, par la poste ordinaire, et assés vite, c'est à dire le 6 d'Août. Ne connoissant une voye plus sûre et commode de répondre et d'y joindre la boîte en question que celle du courrier d'H—, je dresse (parce que j'étois nécessité d'entreprendre le 15 Sept. un voyage en Saxe) et l'une et l'autre quelque tems d'avance, la date du 15 de Sept. ; et comme Alis me marque, un jour de poste avant mon départ, qu'il vous avoit nommé et recommandé de nouveau à Abel, j'y joins deux mots dans un P. S<sup>um</sup>, remets le tout entre les mains du fidèle valet de chambre de la chère Agujari : celui-ci le garde jusqu'au moment que le courrier veut se mettre en route, le lui envoie directement avec une lettre de sa part, dans laquelle il recommande ce paquet pour vous, comme un effet de valeur et d'un grand prix ; reçoit de lui-même l'assurance qu'il en auroit le plus grand soin.

Le 24 Octobre le même valet de chambre, mon commissionnaire institué, m'envoie en Saxe votre chère lettre du 8 Octobre, qui étoit arrivée par la poste. Je la mets dans mon bureau, n'y fait point de réponse, parce que je voulus attendre la vôtre, que je me flattois recevoir par le courrier retournant. En attendant les choses restent là ; mon homme me mande, qu'apparemment Mr. Wr—— n'avoit pas ou le tems de m'écrire ou quoi ; je commençois à m'inquiéter, mais pour y voir bien clair, je ne voulus rien faire qu'après être de retour moi-même. Trois jours après celui-ci, (et il avoit lieu le 12 du courant,) Alis me fait remettre par mon caissier, qui avoit été pendant mon absence à Han . . . chés ses parens, la vôtre du 29 Nov. Sa prudence étoit louable : mais cela ne diminueoit point ma surprise sur ce que vous n'ayés rien reçu. Dès-lors je fis incessamment écrire au dit courrier, nommé Ulenbecker, et il répond hier :

“ Qu'il avoit porté la lettre et la dite boîte dans plus que quatre caffès où vous aviés autrefois coutume d'aller et de vous trouver : qu'à la fin il avoit appris que vous étiez faire un voyage dans le pays : en quoi il avoit été d'autant plus confirmé, qu'il s'étoit trouvé nombre de lettres à votre adresse, avec lesquelles il avoit aussi déposé la boîte, c'est à dire, à la maison où les lettres d'Allemagne sont portées et arrivent, et qu'elle s'y trouveroit encore.”

De grace, mon cher ami, hâtes-vous de vous en informer ; ayés recours à la bonté de Mr. Hinüber. Pour votre légitimation, je joins l'original de la réponse du courrier donnée au valet de chambre Mäntel. S'ils ne se trouvent point, je ferai punir ce misérable d'importance, quoique cela ne peut en rien diminuer la sensible douleur que ce revers me causeroit.

Allons à cette heure à répondre en détail sur vos deux chères lettres du 8 d'Octobre et 29 Nov.

Si Fierville et Lepy vous ont marqués dans leurs lettres leur étonnement et douleur sur l'inactivité et le silence d'Abel au sujet de votre emplacement comme une juste récompense qui vous est due, jugés quelle est l'amertume et l'inquiétude de *mon* cœur, et comme il est vivement affecté par la position actuelle d'un ami au bonheur duquel je porte mes vœux et mes attentions presque plus qu'au mien même, et que je voudrois savoir aussi heureux qu'on peut l'être dans ce monde ci-bas ! Je souffre plus que tout autre, ayant été témoin oculaire de la prudence, de l'infatigabilité et du zèle ardent, qui vous enflammoient à rendre service et à vous vouer aux intérêts d'une personne dont les manes me sont sacrés, et par l'enlèvement de laquelle j'ai vu écrouler le bâtiment de ma fortune, et celle d'un nombre de mes amis chéris et estimables. Depuis je vous ai appris à connoître du côté brillant d'un esprit bien cultivé, de savoir et de plus belles connoissances, et toutes ces belles qualités, ce mérite ne peut point vous conduire à la lice d'un emplacement aussi modeste et modique que vous la demandés ? Cela désespère. Mais malgré ces obstacles, il est dans mon cœur une voix qui me dit qu'avec le tems tout ira bien. C'est aussi de quoi Alis m'assure par une de ses lettres du 14 du courant. Il ne semble point vouloir approuver l'idée dont vous avés fait part à lui et à moi dans la dernière missive ; c'est à dire, de remettre à Abel dans une petite cassette cachetée le cours et la nature de votre négociation au sujet de l'Agujari. Il trouve celle de présenter par le Lord Nugent, ou quelque autre protecteur, une requête à Abel, et d'y demander simplement une place dans un bureau d'état plus naturelle et moins épineuse ; et je crois qu'il a raison, car

le prétexte de vous donner une charge est peut-être ce qui l'embarrasse ; mais il le trouveroit dans la requête et dans l'intercession de celui qui la lui remet. D'un côté cependant je ne vois pas bien clair. Il n'est qu'une voix au sujet de la probité, de la justice et de la candeur d'ame d'Abel : cesseroit-il d'agir par ces sentimens uniquement vis-à-vis de vous ? Seriés-vous le seul d'avoir de la plaindre à si juste titre ? Il faut donc qu'il aye encore de bien fortes raisons pour rester inébranlable contre les sollicitations d'Alis. Mais pourquoi ne les manifeste-il pas ? Cela ne pourroit pas le compromettre — pas être au-dessous de son rang. Pourquoi pas dire, de quelle façon on doit s'y prendre ? Oh si jamais j'apprends que vous avés obtenu votre but, je respirerai plus à mon aise ; j'érigerai à Abel dans mon cœur un autel, auquel la plus vive reconnaissance fera mon sacrifice quotidien.

Alis vous aura expliqué lui-même et plus au long ce qu'il y a encore à faire et ce qu'il en pense. Foible comme je suis, sans influence, sans le moindre soutien, étranger moi-même et au caprice d'une fortune bien modique, je ne puis faire pour mes amis que des vœux ; mais ils sont d'autant plus ardents et sincères : je mesure d'après leurs peines et leurs satisfactions les miennes.

Aujourd'hui je compte notifier à Lepy mon retour. Nous étions convenus que je viendrois cet hyver moi-même à Avignon, mais mon retour retardé a tout anéanti : la saison est déjà trop avancée, et je crains qu'il n'en sera rien. En outre, la commission dont vous me savés chargé exige nécessairement ma présence ces jours-cy.

Au reste, je ne crains pas que nos lettres sont interceptées ; cependant je me sers aujourd'hui de la nouvelle adresse.

Aurai-je encore *les Mémoires des Rois de la France de la*

*Race de Valois ?* Vous seriez bien bon et aimable à me les envoyer si l'occasion s'en trouve.

De grace, marqués-moi quel peut être l'auteur des *Memoirs of an Unfortunate Queen, interspersed with Letters written by herself*. London, J. Bew, 1776. Il est plus que zélé, dit-on, pour nous, mais le stile et les matériaux ne doivent pas être des plus épurés et solides.

Adieu, mon très-cher, mon bien-aimé ami, mon digne Wr—. Si les battemens de cœur pourroient être entendus à cent lieues de distance, vous vous convainqueriez par vous-même que le mien est en agitation quand je vous nomme, quand je m'occupe de vous. Adieu donc. Pas même la mort nous séparera.

## No. IX.

SERAIT-IL bien possible, mon bien-aimé et digne ami, que l'irrégularité dont je me rends coupable dans notre correspondance, diminue et absorbe les sentimens de bonté et de l'amitié précieuse que nous nous s'étions réciproquement voués pour le reste de nos jours ? Vous n'en êtes pas capable ; et moi, je vous aime, je vous estime trop, pour que mon cœur vous oublie, si même ma plume trouve si rarement le loisir de m'entretenir à vous. Quoique toujours bien portant et en possession de votre chérissime lettre du 11 Mars depuis le 18, j'ose avouer que nombre de petites absences, et d'autres excursions en affaire, m'ont privé du bien doux plaisir de vous faire parvenir quelques nouvelles de ma part. Mais actuellement il me tarde d'avoir des vôtres, et surtout d'être informé, si depuis le long intervalle de notre silence, il ne s'est rien changé dans votre sort, et si vous n'avez fait aucune démarche pour accélérer les vues que vous aviez formées. Alis s'étoit proposé à deux ou trois reprises de venir pour quelques jours nous voir,

mais il n'en a rien fait ; mes intentions de m'expliquer vis-à-vis de lui sur votre sujet sont par-là frustrées, et me laissent les regrets, que selon toute apparence le Ciel me prive du bonheur d'avoir contribué par mon zèle et dévouement au moindre soutien de vos vœux. Si cependant je pourrois être persuadé, qu'indépendamment de la petite charge que vous ambitionnés à si juste titre, et dont la difficulté de l'obtenir me paroît une énigme inexplicable, vous auriez de quoi vivre conformément à votre rang et à la situation qu'un homme de votre mérite peut exiger de la Providence, je serois bien plus tranquille à votre sujet. Par des expériences que j'ai faites dans le petit cercle de ma destinée, et les principes qu'on se forme au bout d'une étude du monde et des sorts des hommes comme ils sont communément, je pretends, qu'à tout égard on n'est pas malheureux si le Ciel nous laisse suivre nos penchans dans une sorte de retraite, ignorés de la multitude, estimés et distingués de ceux qui se donnent la peine de nous apprécier au juste, et doués de quelques talens, par lesquels nous sommes à même de faire tout le bien qu'on nous demande, à prêter de l'assistance à ceux qui nous appellent à leur secours, et d'emporter de ce monde le témoignage d'avoir été honnête et toujours prêt de servir au prochain si on étoit capable. Or, mon ami, dites-moi si votre fortune suffit pour vous fournir le nécessaire pour vous laisser vivre avec décence et à votre aise, en cas que les vues que nous formons venoient à manquer ? Je commence petit-à-petit à me former pour l'avenir un plan de vivre qui répond à-peu-près aux idées avec lesquelles je voudrois vous familiariser ; et quoi-que je suis bien plus âgé que vous, et vous doués d'un plus grand fonds d'activité que moi, il me semble qu'avec certaines restrictions elles sont praticables pour toute époque de la vie humaine.

Quelle joie pour moi, mon très-cher et digne ami, de

vous revoir un jour, ou ici, ou, ce qui me feroit bien plus de plaisir, à une campagne près de Leipzig dans la Haute Saxe, où je projette de m'établir pour toujours, si une fois la commission de laquelle vous me savés chargé a cessée de se trouver entre mes mains. Pour me familiariser peu-à-peu avec la verdure et l'air champêtre, j'ai quitté ma maison en ville et ai pris une bien belle et grande dans les extrémités des fauxbourgs, qui a un assés vaste jardin, dont l'entretien et les plantations m'occupent et me font plaisir. Il se trouve que c'est celle que notre ami Lepy et son frère possèdent ici. Je reçois de tems en tems des nouvelles de celui-ci, quoique il ne parle point du tout de ce qui se passe au Nord, et de deux objets qui nous y intéressent le plus. Il a deux graves procès contre un fripon de fermier, qui plaide ici aux tribunaux de justice, et m'a fait son homme de sollicitation ; de quoi je suis bien aise, étant par-là en état de lui être bon et utile à quelque chose.

Le cercueil de feu la chère maîtresse, qui sera fait de bois de mahogany et décoré de bronzes dorées, n'est point achevé ; d'autant plus belles et magnifiques seront les décorations : dommage que le tout sera fourré dans un caveau, qui est rempli, et où à peine le grand jour entre. Le monument que les états font ériger se trouve de même encore entre les mains de l'artiste, et je doute, qui pourra être posé dans un an. Adieu, mon bien cher et estimable ami. Vous adresserés toujours vos lettres à L— : je vous serre à mon cœur et suis *usque ad mortem*

Votre dévoué et inviolablement  
attaché ami.

Z. ce 1 Juillet 77.



## No. X.

## NAMES BETWEEN MONS. DE S—K—F AND ME.

The K. of E.	. . . .	Abel.
The K. of D.	. . . .	Bach.
The Q. C. M.	. . . .	Agujari.
——Juliana	. . . .	Sestini.
The Pr. F—c	. . . .	Millico.
The Pri—sse Fr—c	. . . .	Syrmen.
Lic—n	. . . .	Alis.
B—w	. . . .	Lepy.
Sch—n	. . . .	Grenier.
Tex—r	. . . .	Fierville.
Schaques	. . . .	Heinel.
K—r B—r	. . . .	Valois.
P. of He—c	. . . .	Molé.
Eichstet	. . . .	Vestris.
W—ll	. . . .	Le Kain.
S—k—f	. . . .	Brocard.
Le Vieux C—e Al—	. . . .	Moulin.
Fe—d Al—	. . . .	La Motte.
Pergolese	. . . .	Rantzau.
Lord Su—k	. . . .	Colli.
Diedenhof	. . . .	Wolf.
Beringshold	. . . .	Conjolini.
Da Capo	. . . .	Ami de Beringshold.
Metastasio	. . . .	Ami de Diedenhof.
Handel	. . . .	Gouldsberg.
Marie Mancini	. . . .	La Prin <sup>ss</sup> Her <sup>e</sup> .
Vauglas	. . . .	P. of Bevern.
Cop—n	. . . .	Montpellier.
Lo—n	. . . .	Sud.
Al—a	. . . .	Toulon.
Ha—h	. . . .	Avignon.
Re—rg	. . . .	Lyons.
Z—l	. . . .	Bourdeaux.

## CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE BARON DE BULOW.

## No. I.

Le Roi donne son plein consentement. Tout est prêt pour mon retour, mais l'argent manque. Le Roi ne donnera rien. Il faut en trouver, et m'envoyer. J'attends avec impatience votre réponse.

Adieu, mon cher ami !

N. WRAXALL.

6 Decembre 1774.

Londres.

A Mons. le Baron de B——w.

## No. II.

(" Most secret, and most important !")

MONSIEUR,

La nouvelle la plus malheureuse du monde m'avoit mis dans un tel état d'anéantissement, qu'il n'a été jusqu'ici pas possible de vous dire un mot.

Occupé avec Grenier à délibérer sur les moyens les plus prompts pour exécuter le plan, et rempli de nouvelles espérances non équivoques, fixant pour ainsi dire, malgré le silence opiniâtre de Abel, le jour, le moment tant désiré, je reçois une lettre de Brocard. Je l'ouvre avec précipitation, dans l'idée d'y trouver les choses les plus agréables ; mais, au contraire, la première ligne annonce l'arrêt du destin le plus cruel. Je ne dirai rien de ce que je sentis dans un moment aussi inattendu, puisque je suis sûr que vous vous en faites une idée exacte par la situation dans laquelle vous vous serez trouvé vous-même en apprenant notre malheur. C'en est donc fait de notre bonheur ! Il s'est enfui pour toujours. Nous n'avons pas dû être heureux, nous n'avons pas dû le rendre les autres ! Il ne

nous reste auqu'un espoir. Nous rentrons dan le néant dont nous voulions sortir. Mais que ce fantôme de bonheur envolé ne nous emporte pas votre amitié et attachement. Comptés jusqu'à la fin de mes jours sur le mien. Mes amis vous assurent la même chose. Nous vous devons trop pour devenir ingrat ; tout qui dépendra de nous pour vous le témoigner ne sera jamais négligé. Parlés et disposés de ce qu'il y a en notre pouvoir. Si vous avés eu encore des despencces, dites-le-moi, et j'en ferai mon rapport. Continués surtout, je vous en conjure, dans quel coin du monde que vous vous trouverés, de me donner de vos nouvelles.

“ Private } Dans votre lettre du 21, vous dites que  
 affairs.” } vous avés eu la bonté de vous informer d'un carosse coupé pour la ville, et que vous en avés trouvé un très-bon. Je vous suis infiniment redevable de votre amitié, et j'espère que Fierville vous aura marqué ce dont je l'ai chargé, et que vous aurés eu la bonté d'arrêter le dit carosse. Je vous enverrai au premier jour l'argent nécessaire : comptés là-dessus, et pardonnés que j'ai tardé jusqu'ici. Faites-moi la grace de m'envoyer le carosse le plus tôt possible, et ayés celle de m'acheter aussi deux harnois pour deux chevaux. Je connois votre bon goût, et me réjouis de recevoir un joli équipage anglois. J'aime tout ce qui est de ce pays-là, de cœur et d'ame, et voudrois moi-même en être.

Avés-vous eu la bonté d'avoir eu soin de cette pièce d'étoffe ? Sera-t-elle bientôt teinte, et arrivera-t-elle bientôt ?

Ne pourriés-vous pas me faire l'amitié de me donner une bonne adresse à quelqu'un à Londres, qui voudroit faire des commissions, et exécuter celle que je lui demanderois quand j'aurois besoin de quelque chose ? Il faudroit que ce fût un homme entendu et sûr, qui ménaga mes

interrets, et à qui je pourrois payer des provisions pour sa peine. Par ce moyen on peut avoir de votre pays tout ce qu'on veut : on le reçoit bon, et non pas si cher que quand on l'achète des marchands d'ici.

A l'écriture de celle-ci vous ne me reconnoîtrez pas : mais mes sentiments vous diront qui je suis, et que je vous suis attaché pour la vie.

Le 22 de May.

Donnés-moi bientôt de vos nouvelles, et dites-moi si vous n'avez rien entendu de Abel, et comment il a reçu la triste nouvelle.

" From the Baron de B——, only a few days after the Queen of D.'s death. Most important !"

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#### LETTERS FROM THE BARON DE LICHTENSTEIN.

##### No. I.

MONSIEUR,

A Londres, ce 1<sup>mier</sup> Janv. 1775.

Je viens de recevoir dans ce moment la lettre ci-jointe, et je ne manque pas de vous la faire parvenir tout de suite sous votre adresse que vous avez eu la bonté de donner avant votre départ d'ici.

Mes correspondants sur l'affaire en question ne m'ont dit jusqu'ici autre chose, sinon qu'on avoit reçu la nouvelle du consentement et de l'approbation sur le projet que vous savés, monsieur, avec beaucoup de joie et de satisfaction, et qu'on m'écriroit plus amplement sur ce sujet par l'occasion du courrier qui arriveroit à Londres à-peu-près vers le mi du mois de Janvier. J'ai l'honneur d'être,

Monsieur,

Votre très-humble et très-obéissant serviteur,

H. I. B. DE L.

## No. II.

J'AI reçu, monsieur, la lettre que vous m'avez fait l'honneur de m'écrire en datte du 14<sup>me</sup> de Mars. Je suis très-fâché que mes occupations et mon emploi à Hannovre ne me permettent pas de m'arrêter ici jusqu'au tems de votre retour pour avoir la satisfaction d'apprendre le succès de votre voyage, n'en ayant pas eu, comme vous vous imaginés, des nouvelles par la personne en question. En attendant, j'ai donné l'avis à l'endroit nécessaire de votre arrivée prochaine. Vous trouverez ci-jointe l'adresse de la personne à laquelle *on* veut que vous remettiez vos lettres dont vous pourriez être chargé. Je dois vous dire de n'être pas surpris si vous ne recevés point de réponse. *On* l'adressera à moi. Des raisons que vous savés, c'est à dire, qu'on ne donnera rien d'écrit de sa main touchant cette affaire, ne permettent pas d'agir autrement. Si *on* ne change pas de sentiment, et si *on* ne vous fait pas dire par celui auquel vous donnerés vos lettres, d'attendre ici, je ne vois pas d'autre expédient, que de retourner dans une quinzaine de jours et de venir me trouver à Hannovre, où je compte d'être infailliblement vers la fin du mois d'Avril.

J'ai l'honneur d'être avec la considération la plus distinguée, Monsieur,

Votre très-humble et très-obéissant serviteur,

A Londres, ce 24 de Mars, 1775.

B. L.

*Adresse de la personne à laquelle Mr. Wr. remettra des lettres :*

Monsieur de Hinuber, Jermain-street, St. James.

(" Received in London the 4th of April 1775." N. W. W.)

## No. II.

A Hannovre, ce 9<sup>me</sup> Janvier, 1777.

MONSIEUR,

AYANT perdu, ou plutôt brûlé, avec tous les papiers relatives à l'affaire en question, l'adresse que vous m'aviez donnée à Londres, pour vous faire parvenir avec sûreté mes lettres, je n'ai pu hasarder de répondre à l'honneur de votre dernière du 29 Novemb. par la poste ordinaire. J'ai préféré, monsieur, d'attendre le départ du courrier d'aujourd'hui, le porteur de celle-ci, qui ne manquera pas de faire les recherches nécessaires pour trouver les moyens de vous la remettre en mains propres.

Convaincu comme je le suis du zèle, du parfait dévouement et du désintéressement, autant que du succès heureux, avec lequel vous avés servi dans cette affaire difficile et épineuse, je ne sçaurois assés vous marquer mes regrets de vous savoir encore jusqu'ici sans aucune récompence. Persuadés-vous, monsieur, que j'ai fait tout mon possible pour vous la faire avoir, et que je tenterai par de nouvelles représentations à contribuer d'accélérer cette récompence juste et due à vos peines et services.

Quoique je ne désapprouve nullement le projet que vous avés formé de vous remettre au souvenir du Roi par l'envoi du mémoire dressé sur les circonstances de la négociation dans laquelle vous étiez employé, j'ose vous prier de remettre cette dernière tentative encore pour quelque tems, et d'attendre la réponse de Mr. de S—ff, sur la lettre que vous m'avés envoyée pour la lui faire tenir : Commission dont je n'ai pu m'acquitter, Mr. de S—ff se trouvant absent de Zelle depuis 3 mois : mais sachant qu'il doit nécessairement être de retour vers la fin de ce mois, vous pouvés compter, monsieur, que vous aurés infailliblement sa réponse dans le courant du mois de Février, et

avec elle, les avis de l'effet de ma dernière lettre à sa majesté sur ce sujet.

Il ne me reste qu'à vous souhaiter tout le bonheur que vous mérités, et de vous assurer de la part sincère que je prendrai, si mes vœux pour votre fortune et contentement se réalisent. J'ai l'honneur d'être avec les sentimens de la considération la plus distinguée, Monsieur,

Votre très-humble et très-obéissant serviteur,

BARON DE LICHTENSTEIN.

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PAPERS RESPECTING THE QUEEN OF DENMARK.

Copie

No. I.

Zelle, ce 15 Mai, 75.

La maladie épidémique qui nous menaga n'existe plus ici ; en ville elle n'a point été du tout, et au château elle n'a emporté qu'un page et notre chère Reine, qui fait à si juste titre l'objet de nos plus sincères regrets ; et cela est général. Sa cour, qui l'idolâtroit, est vraiment désolée, malgré la ferme persuasion que notre respectable maître aura soin d'eux ; mais c'est pour elle-même qu'on la regrette, et vous ne sauriez vous imaginer l'affliction et la consternation qui se répandit dans toute la ville lorsqu'on la scût en danger. Elle l'étoit du premier moment qu'elle tomba malade par le jugement de notre habile médecin Leyser ; elle s'en aperçut d'abord elle-même, et lui dit en propres termes : " Vous m'avez tiré deux fois depuis le mois d'Octobre de deux maladies assez sérieuses, mais de celle-ci vous n'en viendrez point à bout : " et elle ne dit que malheureusement trop vrai. La fièvre du premier moment étoit d'une violence prouvée par 131 *Pulsschläge* dans une minute, et les deux derniers jours

l'on ne pouvoit plus les compter. Leyser demanda Zimmermann d'Hannovre, qui vint à son secours, mais sans effet. Le *Friesel* sortit, mais avec des taches qui denotoient une fièvre pourprée, et c'est aussi à cette malheureuse maladie et aux décrets d'une Providence immuable que nous devons sa perte. Après avoir souffert en Chrétienne avec une patience et une resignation parfaite et presque sans exemple, gardé connoissance, marqué comme de coutume les plus tendres et gracieuses attentions pour ses dames d'honneur qui la soignoient dans sa maladie, et parlé jusqu'au dernier moment, elle a fini sa carrière d'une façon qui a édifié et pénétré d'admiration tous les assistans. Elle a vu notre digne Surintendant-general Jacobi et le Ministre Lehzen, qui ne l'a pas quitté et à qui elle a quasi dicté ce qu'il devoit lui lire à plusieurs reprises, et entre autres choses ce beau Cantique de Gellert *über die Liebe der Feinde—Nie will ich dem zu schaden suchen*—en répétant souvent le 5<sup>ème</sup> vers. En un mot, ces dernières heures, où les masques de tous les humains tombent, la fermeté vraiment stoïque avec laquelle elle paroissoit soutenir les revers douloureux d'une infortune si éclatée, la magnanimité de toutes les vertus humaines, peut-être la plus difficile à pratiquer envers ses adversaires, qui ne cessoient point de la persécuter, joint à la conduite irréprochable qu'elle a mené pendant tout le tems que nous avons eu le bonheur de la posséder, nous persuadent, Mr., de la malignité des ennemis que cette auguste princesse a eu. Elle leur a pardonné, et il faut que nous le fassions aussi, en souhaitant qu'ils le reconnoissent pour se convertir ; et il n'y a qu'une voix générale pour se convaincre que si cette jeune Reine étoit tombée en des bonnes mains, et moins exposée et abandonnée aux pièges qu'on lui dressa dès son arrivée à Copenhague, dans un age où l'expérience ne pouvoit que lui manquer, elle auroit fait, et par



son cœur et son esprit si bien orné, les délices de tout un peuple.

A cause d'une nécessité absolue il a fallu déposer son corps après deux fois 24 heures dans le caveau des Duca de Zelle, jusqu'au tems que le Roi d'Angleterre régle la pompe de ces funérailles. Cela s'est fait avec beaucoup d'ordre et de décence par le Grand Marechal de Lichtenstein. Aux sermons à l'église et à la lecture de la *Ab-danckung* toute la ville a fondu en larmes depuis le premier jusqu'au dernier. Son affabilité et sa douceur lui avoient gagné les cœurs même du plus petit peuple. Les Juifs ouvrirent d'abord leur temple pour les prières publiques, et dans les rues l'on n'entendoit que des gemissemens et des invocations pour le rétablissement *unserer guten und lieben Königinn*. Les Etats du Duché de Lunebourg assemblés à Zelle conjointement avec d'autres corps de la magistrature ont envoyé des lettres de condolence au Roi, remplis des expressions qui marquent leur vive douleur, celle du peuple, et la consternation s'est manifestée dans toutes les classes des habitants de ces contrées.

#### No. II.

#### DEATH AND CHARACTER OF THE QUEEN.

SIR,

CONSCIOUS of my own incapacity to draw a portrait so masterly and difficult as that of the late Queen Caroline Matilda of Denmark, I waited in the expectation that some more able and eloquent pen would have attempted it. But few persons in this kingdom were in any degree acquainted with her life or actions while she resided in Copenhagen; perhaps still fewer had the honour to know that exalted sufferer during the latter years which she spent in retreat at Zell. To this unacquaintance with

her Majesty's person may, I doubt not, be imputed the universal silence respecting her ; and it is from the appearance of no other writer in so noble a cause that the present attempt to present her real character to the English people must derive its excuse.

Sacrificed in the first bloom of life, and decked with the fillets of royal misery, she was sent, an inexperienced victim, to a court the most despicably dissolute and debauched in Europe. The man to whom she was wedded, —I mean the present King of Denmark,—was a compound of insanity and brutality. In the frequent paroxysms of debility or frenzy to which he was subject, he resembled the unhappy Charles the Sixth of France ; in the intervals of riot and intemperance he seemed to emulate Alphonso the Sixth of Portugal. Surrounded with spies and emissaries who interpreted the most trifling levities of youth into enormous crimes, the young and unguarded Queen could not long remain in such a court without giving her enemies too favourable an opportunity to effect her fall. They succeeded, and induced the wretched King to become the engine of their malevolence, by signing the order for her imprisonment. The interposition of the British court saved her from further violence, and conducted her to an asylum in the Electoral dominions of Hanover. Here she appeared in her true and native character. Divested of the retinue and pomp which on the throne of Denmark veiled her, in a great degree, from the inspection of nice observers, the qualities of her heart displayed themselves in her little court at Zell, and gained her universal love. Her person was dignified and graceful : she excelled in all the exercises befitting her sex, birth, and station : she danced the finest minuet in the Danish court, and managed the horse with uncommon address and spirit. She had a taste in music, and devoted much of her time, while at

Zell, to the harpsichord. The characteristic style of her dress was simplicity, not magnificence; that of her deportment, an affability which, in a personage of such high rank, might be termed extreme condescension. Her talents were liberal and diffusive: she conversed with the most perfect facility in French, English, German, and Danish; and to these extraordinary attainments she added a thorough knowledge of the Italian, which she studied and admired for its beauty and delicacy. Her manners were the most polished, soft, and ingratiating; and even the contracted state of her finances could not restrain that princely munificence and liberality of temper which made her purse ever open to distress or misery. Though the natural *enjouement* and gaiety of her disposition impressed those who only saw her in the circle, with the idea of tranquillity, of happiness; yet it cannot be doubted that the series of cruel and unmerited sufferings she underwent impressed her mind very deeply, and perhaps slowly conducted to produce those attacks of sickness which in the end proved fatal. Banished with every circumstance of indignity from the throne of Denmark, she yet retained no sentiment of revenge or resentment against the authors of her fall, or against the Danish people. Her heart was not tinctured with ambition, and she looked back to the diadem which had been torn from her brow with a calmness and a superiority of soul which might have made a Philip the Fifth or a Victor Amadeus blush. It was not the crown she regretted: her children only employed her care. The feelings of the Queen were absorbed in those of the mother; and if she wept the day when she quitted the island of Zealand, it was because she was then bereft of those dear objects of her maternal fondness. Two or three months before her death, she showed with transports of joy to Madame d'O——, her first lady of the bedchamber,

a little portrait of the Prince Royal her son, which she had just received. It happened that this lady, some few days after, entered the queen's apartment at an unusual hour : she was surprised at hearing her Majesty talk, though quite alone. While she stood in this attitude of astonishment, unable to retire, the queen turned suddenly round, and addressing herself to her with that charming smile which she alone could preserve at a moment when her heart was torn with the most acute sensations, "What must you think," said she, "of a circumstance so extraordinary as that of overhearing me talk, though you find me perfectly alone?—but it was to this dear and cherished image I addressed my conversation. And what do you imagine I said to it? Nearly the same verses which you applied not long ago to a child sensible to the happiness of having found her father; verses," added she, "which I changed after the manner following." The verses are French, and too delicate to admit of a translation.

"Eh ! qui donc, comme moi, goûteroit la douceur  
De t'appeller mon fils, d'être chère à ton cœur !  
Toi, qu'on arrache aux bras d'une mère sensible,  
Qui ne pleure que toi, dans ce destin terrible."

Madame d'O—— could not speak : she burst into tears, and, overcome with her own emotions, retired hastily from the royal presence.

When she was first apprehended to be in danger from the disorder which seized her, anxiety and consternation were spread through her whole little court, which idolized her ; but when she expired, no language can express the horror and silent grief visible in every apartment of the palace. Leyser, the physician who attended her Majesty during her whole illness, dreaded the event from the first moment. She saw it, and, impressed with a presentiment of her approaching death, which proved but too true,

“ You have twice,” said she, “ extricated me from very dangerous indispositions since the month of October ; but this exceeds your skill : I know I am not within the help of medicine.” Leyser desired that the celebrated physician Zimmermann might be called in from Hanover. He was so ; but her Majesty’s illness, which was a most violent spotted fever, baffled every endeavour. At the beginning her pulse beat a hundred and thirty-one strokes in a minute, but during the two last days it was impossible to count them. She bore the pains of her distemper with exquisite patience, and even showed the most delicate and generous attentions to her maids of honour who waited by her. Her senses, speech, and understanding, she preserved to the last moment ; and only a short time before her death expressed the most perfect forgiveness of all those enemies who had persecuted and calumniated her during life. Monsieur de Lichtenstein, Grand Maréchal of the Court of Hanover, presided at the funeral rites, which were conducted with a pomp suited to her regal dignity. Her Majesty’s body was interred with her ancestors the Dukes of Zell. The streets and the great churches were thronged with crowds of people, drawn by the sincerest grief and condolence, to behold the mournful obsequies of their benefactress pass along in silent state. It was a scene the most affecting and awful to be imagined : nothing was heard but groans, invocations to Heaven, interrupted by sobs and tears, through every quarter of the city. The death of this amiable princess most strikingly reminds one of that of Henrietta, Duchess of Orleans, in the last century. They were both eminent for their accomplishments of mind and person ; they equally constituted the brightest ornament of the courts in which they resided ; they were both torn away in the pride of

youth by violent and short distempers, and in both were some suspicions of unnatural means, commonly received. But the most striking proof of the love and attachment borne to the Queen, and of the impression which her virtues had made among all ranks of people in the country where she died, is the resolution which the states of Lunenbourg framed at Hanover on the 10th of last month.

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